

Heritage NEWS



January 2012



18 January program:
Dr. Mark Hildebrandt,
author of

"Electric Railways of Washtenaw County"
7:30 p.m. @ Ladies' Literary Club

THE INTERURBANS



Detail from the historical marker at Michigan and Park Streets (see page 2)
showing Michigan's Interurban Rail lines fanning out from Detroit to Kalamazoo,
Grand Rapids, Muskegon, Bay City, and Port Huron



Detroit, Jackson & Chicago Interurban on Bridge
(from the Ypsilanti Historical Society Archives)

"YPSI-ANN" Was First Interurban in Michigan

The Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti Street Railway, known informally as the Ypsi-Ann, was an interurban railroad operating in southeastern Michigan making it the first such operation in the state. [SOURCE: Wikipedia]

THE DEAL

The city of Ypsilanti invited the Haines Company of Kinderhook, New York to construct street railway within the city in October 1889. The following summer Charles Delemere Haines arrived here and determined that the city's population could not support its own streetcar system, but an interurban between Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor might be viable. Haines proposed a 7.5-mile line running from downtown Ypsilanti to the eastern edge of Ann Arbor. Haines predicted the system would handle 500 passengers daily; at that time trains operated by the Michigan Central Railroad between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti carried forty.

DUMMY CREATED

The company was officially incorporated on August 30, 1890. The route ran west on Cross Street/Packard Road to the Ann Arbor city limits, near Wells Street. The company

commenced construction on October 22 and the line was completed by mid-December. The company petitioned the Ann Arbor Common Council for permission to extend the line into that city, but was denied. The reason for denial was that the original motive power of the line came not from semi-quiet electricity, but from a rattling and hissing steam locomotive—which had been covered in boards to disguise it as a wood-sided wagon, so that it would be less alarming to horses. Ann Arbor residents opposed it banging through their streets. The AA&YRy therefore negotiated an arrangement with the Ann Arbor Street Railway for its electric cars to meet the dummy at the city limits and exchange passengers.

1891-1929: EARLY SERVICE GOT ROWDY

Regular service began on January 9, 1891, using steam traction. On January 26th the [continued overleaf]

Michigan Historical Marker Restored

Commemorating the state's Interurbans

-Bill Nickels



Before & After: The Michigan Historical Marker in Ypsilanti at Michigan Avenue and Park Street has been restored (see text below)

"MICHIGAN'S INTERURBANS

Michigan's first interurban, the Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor, began operating in 1890. Pulled by a steam engine, the cars went west on Packard Road to the Ann Arbor city limits. Because of the low fares (10 cents one way) and frequent service (cars leaving every 90 minutes) the line was soon carrying over 600 passengers daily. Electric power was adapted in 1896. In a few years a network of interurbans was built in southern Michigan. The "Ypsi-Ann" became part of a Detroit to Jackson road that carried 5,300 passengers a day in 1902. It became possible to go from Detroit to Kalamazoo or from Bay City to Cincinnati on connecting lines. But the automobile, bus, and truck put the interurbans out of business in Michigan in the 1920s. The last interurban from Ypsilanti ran in 1929.

MICHIGAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION REGISTERED SITE NO. 128*

The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation Board met in September to determine how the committed 2011 Home Tour funds and \$500 donated by the Ypsilanti Convention and Visitors Bureau would be spent to restore the Michigan Historical Markers at Prospect Park and Michigan Avenue at Park.

The marker at the corner of Michigan Avenue and Park commemorating the Interurban lines was removed and shipped for restoration during the week of October 10th. Restoration costs have increased because the State of Michigan no longer pays for the purchase of replacement posts. Revenue from the Home Tour was not enough to make up the difference.

The YHF Board decided that the Michigan Avenue marker would be restored and reinstalled with new posts at a cost of approximately \$2,000. In addition, \$1,000 would be set aside in a Heritage Foundation account for the future restoration of the Prospect Park marker.

Additional money donated by any interested organization or individual will be added to the account by the Heritage Foundation for the eventual work on the Prospect Park marker.

"YPSI-ANN" Was The First

[continued from page one]

Ypsi-Ann's owners purchased the AASRy, but the two companies continued to operate separately. The line carried 600 passengers daily, well ahead of projections. The improved connection between the two cities had social effects: students attending the University of Michigan and Normal College mixed on an unprecedented scale. Years later, a former Normal student remembered that: "...the University of Michigan boys would arrive from Ann Arbor on the Ypsi-Ann Interurban to court the Normal College coeds, who were considered more attractive than the U-M coeds. As they alighted from the interurban at the stop at Cross and Summit Streets, a group of Normal College boys would greet them. A battle royal would ensue with most of the participants eventually being dunked in the fountain just east of Welch Hall..."

Trains operated every ninety minutes, at an average speed of eight miles per hour. The starting fare was ten cents.

LINES MERGED AND PROLIFERATED

On August 26, 1896, the two companies formally merged to become the Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti Electric Railway (AA&YRy). By November the route between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti was fully electrified, opening a direct route between the two cities with no need to change trains. The depot in Ypsi was on Washington Street, just north of today's Michigan Avenue (then called Congress Street). The depot in Ann Arbor eventually was located on West Huron, where the Greyhound Bus Station is now. An intermediate depot in Pittsfield Township—a tiny building at the SW corner of Packard and Platt—later housed offices of the short-lived City of East Ann Arbor. On May 11, 1898, the Detroit, Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor Railway (DY&AA) purchased the AA&YRy; a month later interurbans were operating all the way from Detroit to Ann Arbor, a forty-mile route.

END OF THE LINE

Under a variety of names, interurbans continued to operate on the Ypsi-Ann's tracks, eventually coming under control of the Detroit, Jackson and Chicago Railway. The system finally shut down in 1929, in the face of steep competition from buses and automobiles. For years after the 1942 war-time scrap drives, it was believed that all of Ypsi's tracks had been removed, but in 2004 crews rebuilding a section of Washington Street found a stretch of rails buried under the pavement

Definition of "INTERURBAN"

Real-world lines fit on a continuum between wholly urban street railways and full-fledged railroads. George W. Hilton and John F. Due, in *The Electric Interurban Railways in America*, define an interurban as a system which shares most or all of four characteristics:

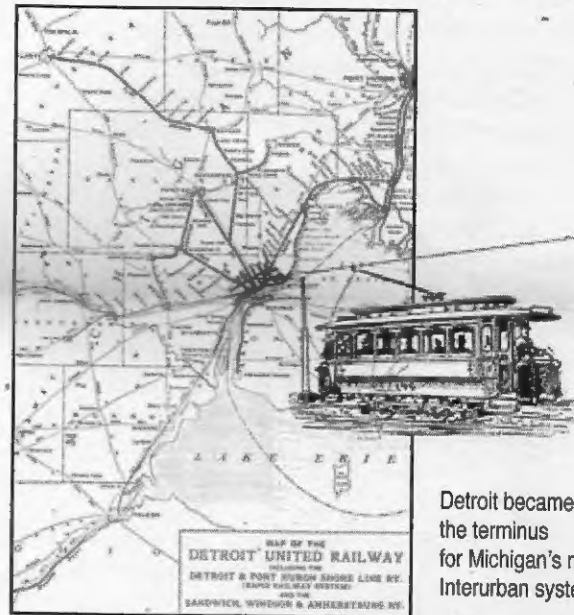
- Electric power
- Passenger service as primary emphasis
- Heavier, faster equipment than urban streetcars
- Operated on street trackage in cities but on roadside tracks or private rights-of-way in rural areas

The definition of "interurban" is necessarily blurry. Some streetcar systems evolved partly into interurban systems with extensions or acquisitions, while other interurban lines became, effectively, light rail systems with no street running whatsoever, or became primarily freight-hauling railroads with a progressive loss of passenger service.

Ypsilanti Really Started Something

The Detroit United Railway operated streetcar and interurban lines across southeast Michigan. Although many of the lines were originally built by different companies, they were consolidated under the control of a Cleveland-based group of investors. The company incorporated on December 31, 1900, and continued to expand into the early 1920s through new construction and the acquisition of smaller concerns. With the acquisition of the Detroit-Jackson line in 1907, it operated more than 400 miles of interurban lines and 187 miles of city street railway lines.

Beginning in 1922, however, the DUR began a process of devolution when it sold the local Detroit streetcar system to the city, under the management of the Department of Street Railways. The company continued to abandon or sell properties throughout the 1920s; on September 26, 1928, the remainder was reorganized as the Eastern Michigan Railways. The last of the DSR streetcars were sold to Mexico City.



Constituent companies of the Detroit United Railway

Wyandotte Division

- Detroit Suburban Street Railway
- Wyandotte and Detroit River Railway

Orchard Lake Division

- Pontiac and Sylan Lake Railway Company
- Grand River Electric Railroad Company
- Detroit and Northwestern Railway

Pontiac Division

- Oakland Railway Company
- Detroit and Pontiac Railway

Flint Division

- Detroit, Rochester, Romeo and Lake Orion Railway
- North Detroit Electric Railway
- Detroit and Flint Railway
- Detroit, Utica and Romeo Railway
- Detroit, Almont and Northern Railroad
- Highland Park and Royal Oak Railroad

Rapid Railway System

- Detroit and River Saint Clair Railway
- Detroit, Mount Clemens and Marine City Railway
- Rapid Railway
- Detroit and Port Huron Electric Shore Line Railway
- Detroit, Lake Shore and Mt. Clemens Railway
- Detroit and Lake Saint Clair Railway

Detroit, Monroe and Toledo Short Line Railway

- Toledo and Monroe Railway
- Detroit, Monroe and Toledo Short Line Railway
- Detroit, Jackson and Chicago Railway
- Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti Street Railway
- Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti Electric Railway
- Detroit, Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor Railway
- Ypsilanti and Saline Electric Railway
- Detroit, Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor and Jackson Railway
- Detroit, Plymouth, and Northville Railway
- Jackson and Ann Arbor Railway Company
- Jackson, Ann Arbor and Detroit Railway

Heritage NEWS



March 2012

Program
Teresa Gillotti
Ypsilanti City Planner
"Urban Forestry plan
and Ypsilanti tree nursery –
a community-wide effort"
[See details on page 3]

7:30 p.m. Wednesday, 21 March 2012
Ladies' Literary Club
218 N. Washington St. Ypsilanti
The public is invited



Frederick Law Olmsted

Fabled Firm Studied Ypsilanti's Landscape

-James Mann [previously published in The Depot Town Rag, October 2008]

The Olmsted Brothers landscape architecture firm sent representatives to Ypsilanti in 1913 to prepare a report for proposed improvements that would form the basis for a general city plan. The founder of the firm, Frederick Law Olmsted, who had planned Central Park in New York, did not personally come to Ypsilanti, but his presence would have been noted if he had—he had died a few years before.

The report, dated December 31, 1913, concerned possible improvements in the roads, trees, parks and playgrounds of the city, as well as suggestions for dealing with what the compilers saw as the problems of the city. The report suggested the city acquire the land on the banks of the Huron River for use as a park system. It noted the benefits to the public the use of Frog Island and what is now Riverside Park would have.

A system of parks, the report suggested, should run along the river from the northern limit of the city to the southern limit. This would allow the public to enjoy the natural beauty of the Huron River that was in little need of improvement. "The river with its many advantages as a naturally beautiful feature of the city is now almost wholly ignored, or worse, it is defiled and treated as a menace to adjacent property."

The report referred to the Water Tower as an imposing shaft of stone, but "surmounted by an ill-proportioned wooden dome." The report further noted that the Water Tower was a subject "worthy of careful study by an architect of the best artistic judgment."

The report was submitted, studied, and tossed onto a shelf where it was in time forgotten. A few of the suggestions came to be, but not because of the Olmsted Brother's report.

From the Olmsted Report:

"...If all the street trees of Ypsilanti were to be wiped out of existence it would unquestionably be a very great loss to the community, a loss that would be reflected in a substantial shrinkage of land values. Lots sell better on a street that is made attractive by trees at their best, as compared with similar lots on a bare street or one with a few small sickly specimens.

"...Street trees have already been driven from Congress Street (Michigan Avenue) and Huron Street near the junctions and from Cross Street and River Street near the railway station. These streets represent the beginning of a treeless business district, such as is all too common in our cities but entirely unnecessary in the case of Ypsilanti."

Other Projects of Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, Brookline, MA

The grounds of the United States Capitol, Washington, D.C. • Grounds for William Vanderbilt's Biltmore Estate
Scott Fountain on Detroit's Belle Isle • New York City's Central Park

Arboreal records need human scale for true comprehension

Trees, all by themselves, are just relative to other trees. In photographs or drawings, the size of a tree is better communicated when a recognizable reference is included.

Victorian drawings of prize-winning trees of the time were made more graphic by the addition of people, cows, and horses to give a sense of scale to the magnificent specimens towering alongside.



BIG TREES in Our History

-American Forests: Protecting & Restoring Forests for Life

The call to search for America's biggest trees first came in the September 1940 issue of *American Forests* magazine, where concerned forester Joseph Sterns published his article "Let's Find and Save the Biggest Trees." Sterns wasn't referring to the famous and historic trees that were already protected, but the giants left standing in virgin forests. Since that call to locate and measure the largest trees of each species, American Forests has maintained the National Register of Big Trees, a list of the biggest trees in America. The Big Tree Program is active in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and is used as a model for several Big Tree programs around the world. With sponsorship from The Davey Tree Expert Company since 1989, the National Big Tree Program has been able to reach a wider audience and promote the same message for over 70 years: regardless of size, all trees are champions of the environment.

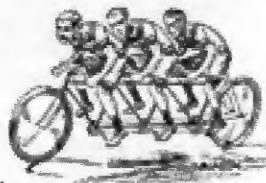
2011 National Register of Really Big Trees

American Forests' 2011 National Register of Big Trees represents more than 660 species – 30 more than last year – with trees in 45 states and the District of Columbia. The registry lists a total of 751 grand champion trees. Newcomers include the co-champion Osage-orange trees in Virginia and Delaware, the Rocky Mountain Douglas fir in Texas, the Virginia pine in West Virginia, and the eastern white oak in Indiana.

There are still 210 eligible species that have no champions, so if you want to become a big tree hunter with an instant champion to your credit, look for one of these trees. While the nation's most avid big tree hunters are equipped with hypsometers, relascopes, and lasers, amateur tree hunters can get started in their own backyards with sticks and tape measures.

Michigan TREE CHAMPIONS by county:

Berrien:	Weeping WILLOW, Sandbar WILLOW, Gray DOGWOOD
Cass:	Common HACKBERRY, Green ASH
Charlevoix:	White POPLAR
Clinton:	White WILLOW
Kalamazoo:	Pin CHERRY
Kent:	Black MAPLE, Common HOPTREE
Gogebic:	Red PINE
Grand Traverse:	Black WILLOW
Leelanau:	Mountain paper BIRCH, White ASH, Roundleaf DOGWOOD
Newberry:	Silver MAPLE
Manistee:	Black ASH
Washtenaw:	American HAZELNUT, Downy HAWTHORN, American PLUM, Allegheny SERVICEBERRY

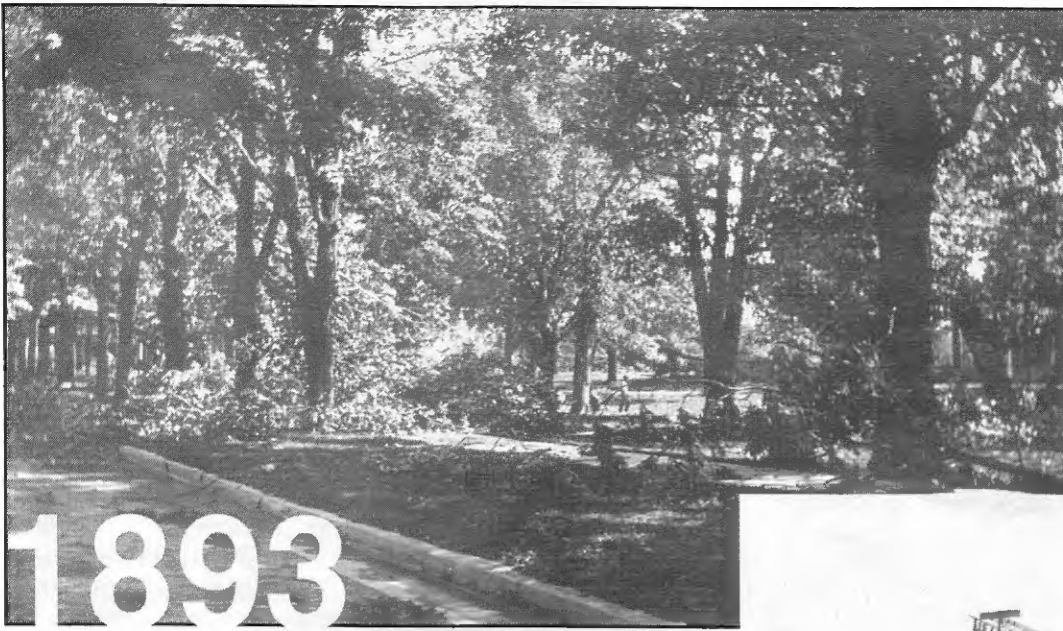


Tree Champions you can spot within a good bike ride from home:

- **European Buckthorn**
Ann Arbor, North of Huron River Drive, opposite Nichols Arboretum
- **Common Juniper**
5 miles North of Chelsea
- **Box Elder**
NW of Milan,
Saline & Mooreville Roads

Other notable GIANT TREES (but not Champions) in Washtenaw County

Chinese Lacebark Elm
English Elm
European Buckthorn
Chinkapin Oak
Douglas Fir
Lacebark Pine
Saucer Magnolia
Common Juniper
Michigan Holly
Fringe Tree
Yellow-wood
Cedar of Lebanon
River Birch
Box Elder
Amur Maple
Paperbark Maple



**"Trees down"
is bad news,
but a good
occasion for
recording
their loss**

**The 1893 Cylcone
provided just that
opportunity**

Photos from the Archives of
the Ypsilanti Historical Society

Trees damaged on Huron St., but so many left that the houses are not visible

When many of the trees left town

Other than the Olmsted Brothers, not many of us go around town taking pictures of our trees. Oh, Mom used to say, "Stand over there by the rose bush so I can take your picture," but other than that, we mostly took pictures of our trees when they were broken down by storms. Until that happened, we just took them for granted.

In 1893, everyone in Ypsilanti probably recognized the folks in the photos on a residential corner looking at the damage to the DeNike house, but today, it is difficult to identify the people, the house, and the exact location of the damage. What seemed such a disaster at the time fades into history.

Gawkers strolled along Congress (Michigan Avenue) Street to examine the roofless buildings and wonder if the businesses housed there would ever reopen, but the trees—we were sure—could always grow back and our neighborhood would fit the same old stage set that we had become accustomed to.

On the occasion of such natural disasters, we tend to stand back and view the carnage and say, "Oh, the trees! It's just not the same place without the trees..."

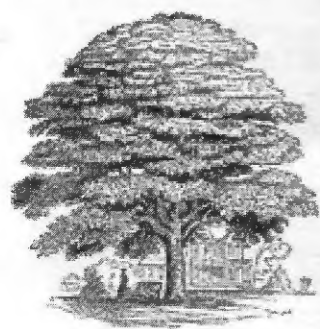
Today, everybody seems to be carrying a camera. Now, if they will just label and date the product, there will be an identifiable record for our following generations.



Damage to the DeNike House



Cyclone damage to Ypsilanti's downtown business district



Ypsilanti Tree Survey

-Teresa Gillotti, Planner II/Community & Economic Development

The City of Ypsilanti has applied for and received a grant to complete a tree inventory of street and parks trees in the City and to develop an urban forestry plan. This plan will then be used to inform what trees to plant in a city-owned Tree Nursery to be located on the SE corner of the Water Street Redevelopment Area.

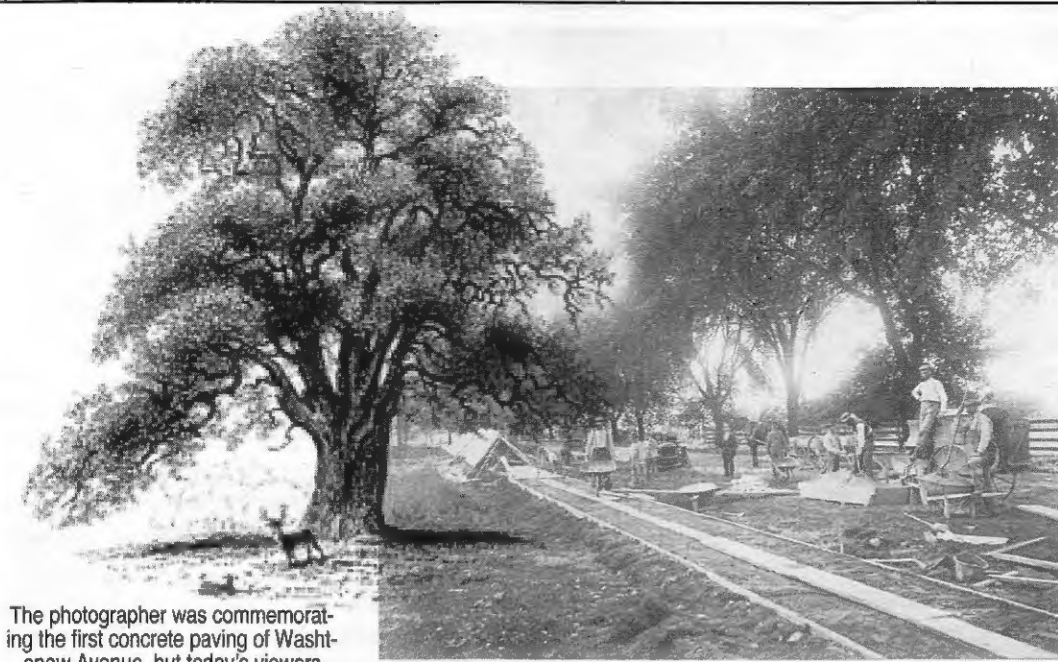
Once developed, the City hopes to create a program whereby neighbors, businesses, and others interested in replanting street and parks trees can do so by request and use material from the tree nursery for the benefit of all. There's much to do in coordinating this effort, but the nursery setup and planting are scheduled for this spring and fall.

1000 words?

Pictures may be worth more than that. Many will see the photo at left as a primary source document of the original paving of Washtenaw Avenue between Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor. They will revel in the crude pup-tents laid over the fresh cement to keep the morning dew or rain off while it dries.

Others will note the clothing on the workmen. A few may even recognize their "Uncle Charlie" from old family photos.

For this issue, we marvel at the elm trees. Remember Dutch Elms?



The photographer was commemorating the first concrete paving of Washtenaw Avenue, but today's viewers note that it was not necessary then to remove all the trees first

There's plenty of life in our cemeteries

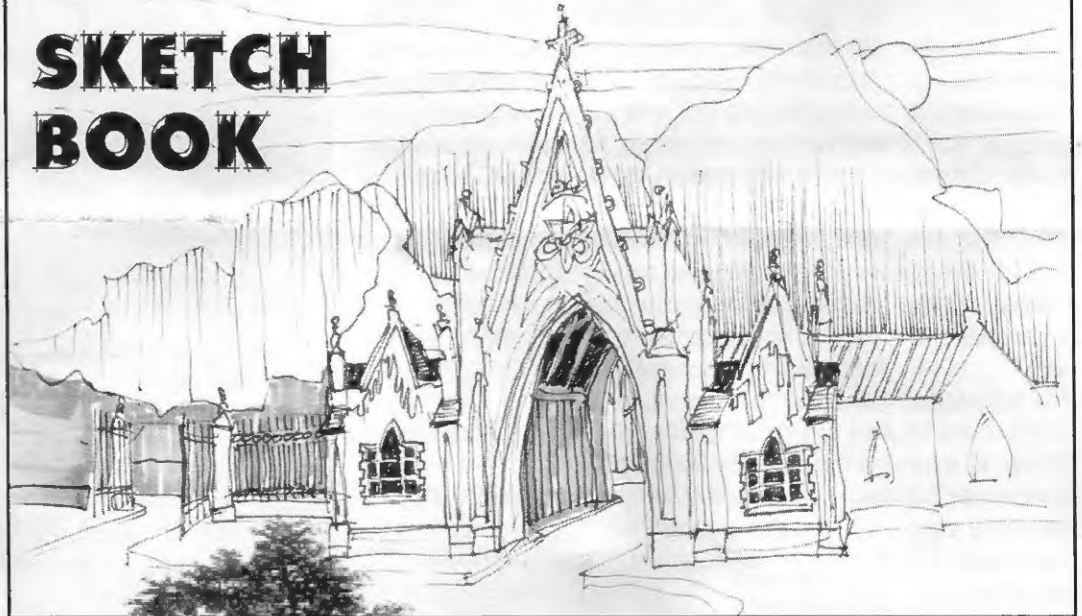
One walking tour through Ypsilanti's historic Highland Cemetery and visitors move easily from reading grave stones to admiring the landscape. That's no accident. The grounds were laid out for just such a reaction.

Colonel James Lewis Glenn (1815-1876) of Niles, MI, designed three cemeteries in the "rural" or "garden" type of cemetery popular in the 1840s: Ann Arbor's Forest Hill in 1859, Silver Brook in 1863 in Niles, and Ypsilanti's Highland in 1864.

"Its own seasonal beauty provides links with the natural ebbs and flows of life," is the apt description from Highland Cemetery's promotional material.

Highland has a rich array of plantings, including those native to this part of Michigan. The Michigan Conservancy has cataloged the flora, making a visit to Highland a treat for horticulturists and plant lovers.

SKETCH BOOK



Entry gate to Detroit's Elmwood Cemetery, one of Frederick Law Olmsted's many projects and site of the Battle of Red Run. Grand tree specimens surround the stately resting places of many of the state's governors.



In addition to Detroit's Elmwood Cemetery, other places in Michigan to see the landscaping works of Frederick Law Olmsted include Belle Isle Park, Bay City's Carroll Park, and Marquette's Presque Isle Park.

And there's always the grounds of the U.S. Capitol, New York City's Central Park, and the gardens at Biltmore Estate.

Woodman, read the rules! Ypsilanti has ordinances for that:

The City of Ypsilanti does not take trees for granted. We have a whole section of ordinances having to do with trees and shrubs in the city. Although we have not yet had rules protecting historic trees as we do for historic buildings, we have vital rules for protecting trees and shrubs generally:

Sec. 110-49. - Protection of trees and shrubs generally.

No person shall break, injure, mutilate, kill or destroy any tree or shrub on public property, or set any fire or permit any fire or the heat therefrom to injure any portion of any tree.

No toxic chemicals or other injurious materials shall be allowed to seep, drain or be emptied on, near or about any tree; provided, that this shall not prohibit the use of city approved chemical control of tree and brush growth.

No electric wires or installation or any other lines or wires shall be attached to any tree in any manner that shall cause damage thereto.

All persons having under their care, custody or control facilities which may interfere with the trimming or removal of any tree covered by this article shall, after notice thereof by the public works director, promptly abate such interference in such a manner as may permit the trimming or removal of any tree by the public works director.

There's even an ordinance on trees we don't especially like:

Sec. 110-52. - Undesirable species of trees.

The city manager is hereby authorized to direct the public works director to remove any undesirable species of poplar, willow, box elder, soft maple, tree of heaven, ash, wild chestnut and cottonwood trees growing on any right-of-way, park or public place in the city.

Headings from the City Ordinance re trees:

- Definitions
- Applicability
- Power and control of city manager
- Blight violation
- Permit to prune, spray, etc.
- Planting; permission required
- Planting prohibited where roots may injure sewers, walks, etc.
- Planting near street intersections
- Orders to plant or remove
- Assessment of costs of planting and removal.
- Spacing of trees planted in rights-of-way
- Planting near sidewalks
- Use of trees as anchors.
- Excavations and drive-ways near trees
- Trimming of trees obstructing streets
- Trimming by city
- Interference with growth of trees
- Damage from leaking gas
- Removal of dead and diseased trees
- Removal of living trees
- Trees and shrubs interfering with fire hydrants, sewers, etc.
- Chemical control and trimming by public utilities



Woodman, Spare That Tree!

By George Pope Morris

WOODMAN, spare that tree!

Touch not a single bough!
In youth it sheltered me,
And I 'll protect it now.
'Twas my forefather's hand
That placed it near his cot;
There, woodman, let it stand,
Thy axe shall harm it not.

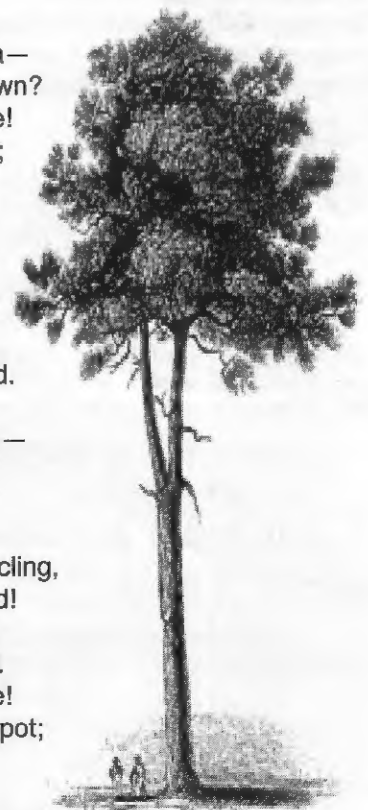
That old familiar tree,
Whose glory and renown
Are spread o'er land and sea—
And wouldst thou hew it down?
Woodman, forbear thy stroke!
Cut not its earth-bound ties;
Oh, spare that aged oak
Now towering to the skies!

When but an idle boy,
I sought its grateful shade;
In all their gushing joy
Here, too, my sisters played.
My mother kissed me here;
My father pressed my hand—
Forgive this foolish tear,
But let that old oak stand.

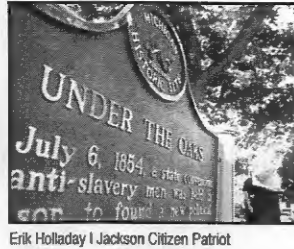
My heart-strings round thee cling,
Close as thy bark, old friend!
Here shall the wild-bird sing,
And still thy branches bend.
Old tree! the storm still brave!
And, woodman, leave the spot;
While I've a hand to save,
Thy axe shall harm it not.

Trees not seen since Olmsted's 1913 study:

American Elm
American Chestnut
Red Oak
Eastern Hemlock
Black Cottonwood
Murray Birch
Douglas Hawthorn
Black Crownberry



Bruce Barton, at right, announces the start of the program commemorating the 155th anniversary of the formation of the Republican Party at Under the Oaks park in Jackson, MI. The party was formed in this oak grove on July 6, 1854



Erik Holladay / Jackson Citizen Patriot

Trees in our history

Black Hawk Tree, a cottonwood in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. Debunked local lore held that Sauk Chief Black Hawk once hid amongst its branches to escape his pursuers. The tree was destroyed by a storm during the 1920s.

The Burmis tree, a limber pine near Crowsnest Pass, Alberta. Declared dead in 1979 but still standing on the north side of the Crowsnest Highway.

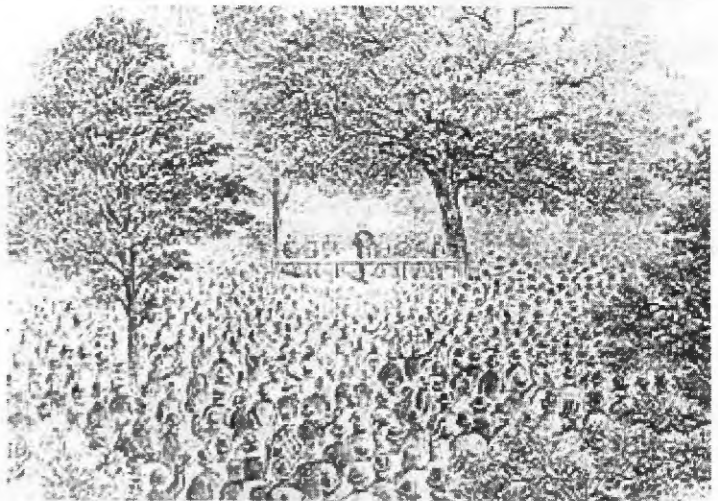
The Buttonwood tree which once stood at the foot of Wall Street in New York City. It was under this tree that stock traders once gathered and formed the Buttonwood Agreement which later evolved into the New York Stock Exchange.

The Charter Oak, in which the Connecticut charter was hidden from English governor-general Sir Edmund Andros.

The Genesee Big Tree at Genesee, New York, a giant tree on the Genesee River, reported by some as an elm, by others as an oak. It was the site of the 1797 Treaty of Big Tree between Robert Morris and the Seneca tribe to sell most of western New York, also known as The Holland Purchase. It was washed away in a flood in the mid 19th century.

The Mercer Oak, the white oak on which a wounded General Hugh Mercer rested during the American Revolutionary War's Battle of Princeton. Despite its fall in early 2000, it continues to be Princeton Township, New Jersey's emblem.

The Mingo Oak, formerly the oldest and largest white oak in the United States until its fall on September 10, 1938. It was located in Mingo County, West Virginia.



"Under the Oaks" The First Republican Convention, Jackson, Michigan 1854

The Prometheus, a Great Basin Bristlecone Pine, was the oldest living non-colonial organism. The age was estimated at 5,000 years. The tree was cut down on August 6, 1964, by a graduate student and U.S. Forest Service personnel for research purposes, though at the time they did not know of its world-record age.

The Treaty of Greenville Tree in Greenville, Ohio.

The Mother of the Forest (688 BC - AD 1852), a 321-foot giant sequoia in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, central California.

Angel Oak, thought to be one of the oldest living organisms east of the Mississippi River, stands on Abraham Waight's 1717 land grant, derives its name from the Angel estate. Local folklore tells of ghosts of former slaves appearing as angels around the tree.



Wawona Tree, a giant sequoia with a tunnel cut through it. Fell in 1969.

The Wye Oak, honorary state tree of Maryland, largest white oak tree in the U.S.

Become a Member

The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation encourages both private and public preservation efforts.

Join today and learn about what we have to offer!

Visit the website at www.yhf.org to enter your name and address.

Mail it along with a check for the appropriate amount to our treasurer.

Our membership year runs from January-December.

Make checks payable to: Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

c/o Claudia Pettit

945 Sheridan

Ypsilanti, MI 48197



Annual Membership Categories

Students & Seniors	\$5
Individual	\$10
Family	\$15
Contributing	\$25
Supporting	\$50
Sustaining	\$100
Lifetime	\$1000

Over 100 historical markers have been placed in the city by the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

Criteria for selection of Historical Markers

The time is coming again for The Heritage Foundation's Marker Award Banquet. It will take place Wednesday, 23 May 2012 at the Ladies' Literary Club. At the banquet, owners of houses that meet certain criteria are recognized for their efforts and Historic Building Markers are awarded in order to publicly identify buildings of special merit. You can nominate a home or building for this special award. How about bringing places that you think deserve an award to the attention of the selection committee?

Here are the criteria used by the committee:

- The building is within the boundaries of the City of Ypsilanti.
- The building predates 1950 and has an identifiable architectural style.
- The building is well and appropriately maintained (maybe it has just been rehabilitated).
- The grounds are maintained.
- If it is a rental property, the property has had appropriate maintenance for at least two years.
- The building has been developed sensitively.

The following example gives an idea of what is meant by "appropriate maintenance."

The siding on the building is what was originally intended or could have been used originally.

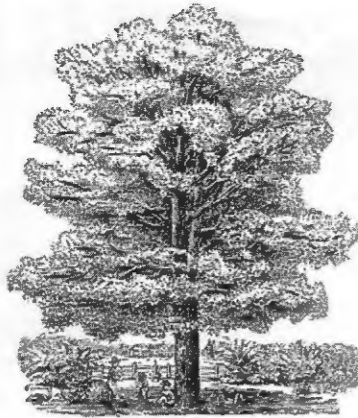
Vinyl siding on a 19th century building is never appropriate.

- The windows are original or identical to the original in size and configuration.
- Porches, railings and steps are appropriate to the period and style of the building.
- Any additions are compatible.

One-of-a-kind markers are possible in order to recognize the preservation and stabilization of a significant or high-profile building that has had a history of mistreatment.

These will be selected after a case-by-case review. If you would like to nominate a building for a Historic Marker designation send a very brief description of the building and its address to:

Don Randazzo
Chair, YHF Marker Committee
6101 Hitchingham Road, Ypsilanti, MI 48197
e-mail: drandazzo@provide.net



Heritage News Briefs

May's marker awards will go to historic structures in industry

The Foundation has recognized houses and barns; the May 2012 awards of markers' will emphasize commercial and industrial examples throughout the City.

Newberry appointed to Foundation Board

With his EMU Historic Preservation degree in hand, Michael Newberry has joined the YHF Board. He is owner of a historic home in Ypsilanti, former intern at Ypsilanti Historical Museum, and is employed at Materials Unlimited.

Festival works to restore "heritage" theme

James Mann is heading a committee of folks determined to put more emphasis on local history and heritage in this August's annual Ypsilanti Heritage Festival.

Ypsi history writer featured

Out-takes from MICHIGAN HISTORY magazine, March/April 2012, Conversations: With editor Patricia J. Mahjer and Ypsilanti's Laura Bien

Mahjer: "Laura Bien didn't intend to assume the mantle of "local historian." After earning a literature degree, she first taught English as a Second Language both abroad and in the U.S. She followed that with an editing position at an Ann Arbor magazine. But, with the dawn of blogging in the early 2000s, she found a forum that allowed her the freedom to research and write about a myriad of interests, including the history of her adopted community of Ypsilanti."

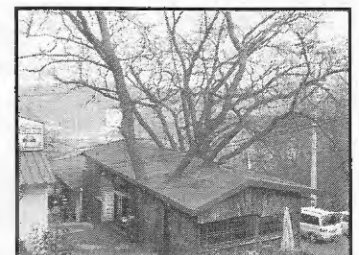
"She continues to blog while also contributing to online newspapers. Her work has appeared in MICHIGAN HISTORY. And, late last year, the History Press published her second book on Ypsilanti history."

Bien: "A historian ... has sufficient imagination and depth of historical knowledge to be able to suggest connections when none remain in archival materials. I work as a history writer and, as such, am just an aspiring autodidact."

And, in describing her work from Ypsilanti's Fletcher-White Archives, Bien notes, "The archives contain photos, genealogies, old newspapers, diaries, maps, blueprints, postcards, letters, tax records, crime dockets, yearbooks, obituaries, and artifacts. It also has file collections for Ypsilanti families, cemeteries, businesses, organizations, and churches, and a subject file with assorted community subjects."

Modern house not inhibited by historic tree

All this attention to detail without the protection of a Historic District Ordinance

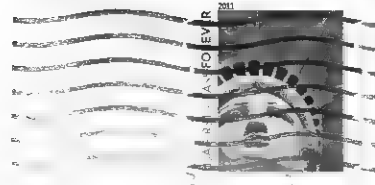




The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

Heritage News

Claudia Pettit
945 Sheridan
Ypsilanti, MI 48197



Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

Board Members

Hank Prebys, President
Joe Mattimore, Treasurer
Jan Arps-Prundeanu
Lani Chisnell
Tom Dodd
Pattie Harrington
Barry LaRue
Bill Nickels
Michael Newberry
Alex Pettit
Claudia Pettit
Don Randazzo
Jane Schmiedeke

Nancie & Don Loppnow
5480 Red Oak Ct.
Ypsilanti, MI 48197-8934

*Dedicated to the belief that one of Ypsilanti's
greatest resources is its wonderful historic architecture*

See you at the General Meeting - Wednesday, 21 March 2012, at 7:30 p.m.

Heritage News is the newsletter of the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation. It is published five times a year, September, November, January, March, and May; and distributed, free of charge to the membership by mail, and made available at various business locations in the City.



"What artists so noble...as he who, with far-reaching conception of beauty, in designing power, sketches the outlines, writes the colors, and directs the shadows of a picture so great that Nature shall be employed upon it for generations, before the work he arranged for her shall realize his intentions."

-Frederick Law Olmsted

2012 SCHEDULE

Meetings are held at the Ladies' Literary Club,
218 N. Washington Street, Ypsilanti, at 7:30 p.m.
The public is welcome.

21
MARCH

Teresa Gillotti, Ypsilanti City Planner
"Urban Forestry plan
and Ypsilanti tree nursery -
a community-wide effort"

23
MAY

Annual Marker Awards Banquet

19
AUGUST

35th Annual
Heritage Festival Home Tour

SEPTEMBER

TBA

NOVEMBER

TBA

Heritage NEWS



**Commerical establishments
have been found on this
Ypsilanti site since 1790**



A French fur-trading post in New York of the same period
as the Godfroy-Beaugrand enterprises that reached to Ypsilanti

From the French fur trading posts of Jean Baptiste San-
scrainte (1790) and Gabriel Godfroy (1801)
...to the Detroit Edison Company and the Masonic Temple
...to the Riverside Arts Center and its Off-Center Gallery
at 76 N. Huron Street, Ypsilanti's most venerated and
researched historic site is now covered with the "crackers"
that bring electricity to the downtown district.



The site of Godfroy's trading post today: electrical equipment powers Ypsilanti's
central business district from behind the Riverside Arts Center/Off Center Gallery
(formerly the offices of Detroit Edison/DTE)

What did Godfroy's look like? See pages 6-7

PROGRAM Annual Marker Awards Banquet

**7:30 p.m. Wednesday
23 May 2012**

Ladies' Literary Club
218 N. Washington St., Ypsilanti
The public is invited

Heritage Foundation's 2012 Marker Awards go to Commercial Buildings

Markers recognizing sensitivity to such preservation eth-
ics as restoration, maintenance, and craftsmanship don't
just go to the old-house painted-lady Victorians. Ypsilanti
even recognizes barns, garages, and out-buildings with
marker awards. This year's marker awards all go to
commercial establishments who could more easily have
moved their businesses to a pole barn out by the airport.

We're awfully glad they didn't.

With the exception of Michigan Ladder, which is still
used for its original purpose, the other historic commer-
cial structures are great examples of adaptive reuse,
which is so critical to the preservation of historic struc-
tures.

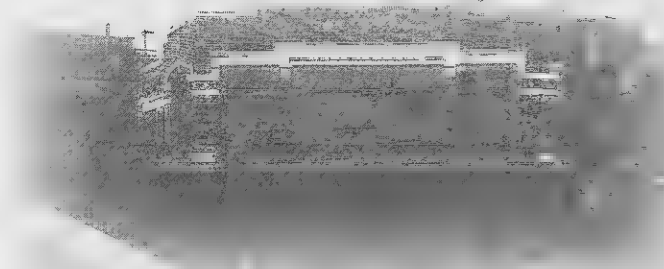
Marker
properties

highlighted
in this issue

- **Corner Brewery**
770 Norris Street
- **Materials Unlimited**
2 W. Michigan Avenue
- **MCRR Freighthouse**
100 Rice Street
- **Michigan Ladder Company**
12 E. Forest Avenue
- **Millworks Building/Ypsi Food Co-op**
312 N. River Street
- **Utilities Instrumentation Service**
306 N. River Street
- **Ypsilanti Automotive History Museum**
100 E. Cross Street

Donald Randazzo served as chair for the Ypsilanti
Heritage Foundation Marker Committee's research and
selection process.

2 W. MICHIGAN AVENUE

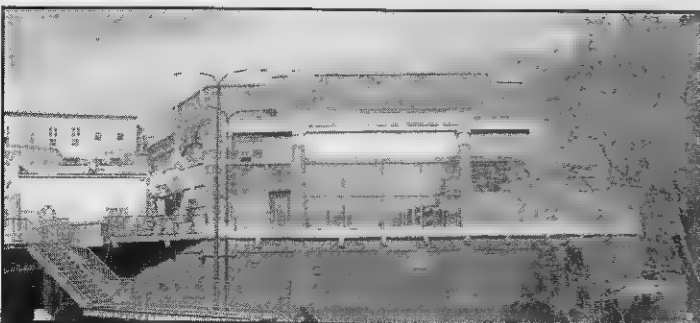


City directories show an auto dealership here in 1927, an Oldsmobile dealership in 1935, a Chrysler-Plymouth dealership in 1941, and the Terrace Ballroom in 1943. By 1945 it was a USO Club and, at WW II's end, it served as an unemployment office. In 1945 this was the Moose Lodge and remained so until Reynold Lowe bought this exotic Art Deco property in 1981 for the new home of Materials Unlimited after a disastrous fire destroyed his original architectural salvage business on Morgan Road.

Today's 15,000-square-foot showroom covers three floors brimming with antiques, restored fireplace mantels, leaded glass doors, stained and beveled glass windows, salvaged hardware, and other architectural items.

Over the years, Materials Unlimited has evolved into a full-service facility. Their production department restores antique furniture and architectural appointments. The lighting restoration department is a UL-listed shop where they rewire antique light fixtures using UL approved replacement parts to ensure safety while preserving beauty. Creative new uses for salvaged antiques are a specialty. Whether transforming salvaged doors into front bars, church altars into bathroom vanities or kitchen islands, and beveled glass into headboards, these are truly creative craftsfolk.

"Fortunately today, historic buildings are more often restored than destroyed," says Lowe, "but this does make salvaged details harder to find. We pride ourselves on having one of the nation's most impressive collections. It is exceptional and it is ever-changing." Each visit to Materials Unlimited is different because Lowe is always seeking out beautiful and unusual items to offer his customers. A talented staff of Architectural Design Consultants helps customers with large projects or small.



312 N. RIVER STREET



The Millworks Building was a 19th century foundry that made wheels for grinding flour. Over the years the structure has housed a variety of creative enterprises, including the original home of Huron Signs.

Today's owner, the Ypsilanti Food Cooperative, began a "bag co-op" on Sheridan Street in the early 1970s, supplying produce and cheese purchased at Detroit's Eastern Market.

The Co-op follows the Seven Cooperative Principles and offers natural foods with emphasis on organic and locally-grown and -made produce and groceries. Unlike a common corporation, decisions about how to run the Co-op are not made by outside shareholders, and it achieves a higher degree of social responsibility than its corporate analogues. Much of its revenue is returned to its local economy.

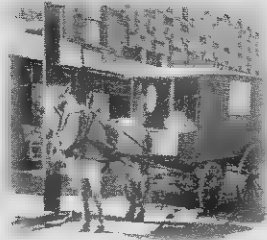
The Millworks Building, itself, is an example of "adaptive reuse" of a historic urban industrial building, conserving materials, eliminating the need to be added to the land fill, and lowering the embodied energy use. "The GREENEST building," they say, "is one that's already built."

Emissions reduction is the result of many customers and staff walking or biking in. Cloth bags and re-use of containers is encouraged. Energy efficiency is achieved by 42 solar panels providing renewable energy. In-line water heaters supply the bathrooms and bakery.

Double-pane windows, high-performance lighting and use of CFLs increase reduction of electricity. Motion-sensor lighting in bathrooms and parking lot draw electricity only on demand. Water is conserved through xeriscaping with native plants and deep mulch. The alley herb garden uses rain barrels gets its watering from rain barrels capturing roof run-off.



306 N. RIVER STREET



The Millworks Building earned its name the hard way: Philo Ferrier & Son ran a foundry here in 1873. From 1910 to 1912 G.H Scharf Company manufactured automatic smoke-preventers. In 1922 the Wolverine Forged Drill Company began business here and from 1939–1941 St-reicher Die & Tool occupied entire building. 1943–1945 saw Ypsi Sheet Metal & Roofing and from 1948–1973 Forbes Cleaners did business here. The building stood vacant in 1974 until Huron Advertising (Signs) established itself in this space from 1975–1979. The Millworks Building was divided into three separate commercial spaces circa 1980.

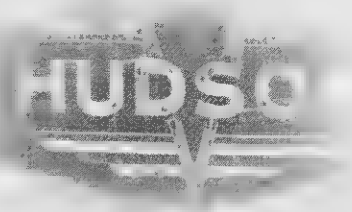
Today, the UIS Group of companies is headquartered here for service in the municipal, industrial, new construction, and commercial markets. The three company network comprises UTILITIES INSTRUMENTATION SERVICE, INC., UIS PROGRAMMABLE SERVICES, INC., and DJWheeler HYDRO ELECTRIC SERVICES.

As a member of the InterNational Electrical Testing Association (NETA), the UIS Group provides a complete array of electrical testing, troubleshooting, and power analysis. They also provide, install, calibrate, and maintain instrumentation and control systems designed specifically for the customer's needs. As a Motorola-Certified MOSCAD Solution Provider and Authorized VAR as well as a Registered Wonderware System Integrator, the UIS Group specializes in providing reliable SCADA systems that allow remote monitoring and control from a central location. Their field personnel are also certified by the International Society for Measurement and Controls (ISA).

UIS Group's fleet of service vehicles is often seen parked in the lot south of their building, taking up the spaces not long ago filled by horses and wagons loading up at the same doors next to the railroad's main line. The more things change, some say, the more they stay the same.



100 E. CROSS STREET



The U.S. government deeded this property to Hiram Jones in 1824 who sold it to the Ypsilanti Electric Company to build the first structure here in 1892. Washtenaw Electric Company purchased the assets in 1900 and became the Washtenaw Light & Power Company in 1903. That same year, Comstock Sash Lock & Novelty Company purchased the property.

Comstock became Michigan Pressed Steel Co. in 1905 and, in 1916 Joseph H. Thompson, one of Michigan's first Dodge dealers, occupied the property. Thompson purchased the property in 1912 adding the wood structure west of the original brick building. In 1928, Thompson moved to a new building on Michigan Avenue. Scott Sturtevant, a Willys-Overland dealer, occupied the building from 1927–1929.

In 1933, Alex Longnecker and Carl L. Miller established Hudson Sales & Service, featuring Hudson motor cars. Longnecker purchased the property from Thompson in 1943 and, in 1945, Miller purchased the property and Longnecker's interest in the Hudson Sales & Service and later as an American Motors dealer until 1958 when he bought and sold used cars only. Miller's son, Jack C. Miller, continues as an auto-related business today.

In 1995, the Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Museum opened with the purchase of 112 E. Cross, a 1954 property that had been leased to the United States Postal Service as a parcel post sorting center and later used as a warehouse and circuit board manufacturing shop.

New construction in 1999 joined 112 E. Cross with the original brick structure, creating exhibit space for the Auto Museum, featuring such unique Ypsilanti contributions to the American auto industry as Apex Motors, Hudson, Corvair, Tucker, Kaiser-Frazer, and Hydramatic innovations.

Today the property is featured as a MotorCities National Heritage Area, an affiliate of the National Park Service dedicated to preserving, interpreting and promoting the automotive and labor heritage of the State of Michigan.



770 NORRIS STREET



Central Specialty Company started to produce machinery and accessories for Sears in the early- to mid-1930s on Norris Street, near Forest Avenue. King-Seeley acquired Central Specialty in 1944. Machinery and accessories with the Sears source code "103" were from Central Specialty on items carrying the Craftsman, Companion and Dunlap labels.

Central Specialty also made automotive components including an intake manifold for the Hudson Motor Car Co. and a power steering pump body for the Chrysler Corp.

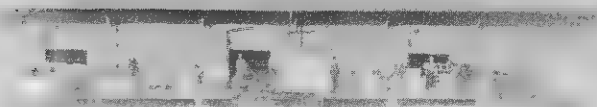
With its own casting and machining facilities, Central Specialty's engineering and administration building was across the street at 770 Norris. Some of the manufacturing plant still exists but the casting facility was torn down when Motor Wheel Corporation purchased the plant in 1964 to begin production of automobile brake drums and disk brake rotors.

The engineering and administration building was used as overflow office space by Eastern Michigan University. In May 2006, Matt and Rene Greff, Ypsi residents who owned Arbor Brewing Company, opened a brewpub and microbrewery, partially financed by a network of community members, with the membership fee largely refunded in the form of a house account.

Now the distribution headquarters of the ABC (Arbor Brewing Company) family, the Corner Brewery has become a warm and inviting place. "Corner is casual," they say. Order your food at the bar and they'll buzz you when it's ready. While you're waiting, enjoy one of their beers, a crisp cider, or a glass of wine. There's free wifi, dartboards, board games, and numerous community events are hosted at Corner. In summer they open up the expansive backyard beer garden and, when it's chilly, you can sit by the cozy fireplace. This 21-and-up establishment welcomes children accompanied by a parent until 9 p.m.



100 RICE STREET



The Michigan Central Railroad reached Ypsilanti in 1838 and, by the Civil War, Ypsilanti was connected to an elaborate transportation system sending goods as far as Toronto, Quebec, New York and Boston. The railroad continued as a primary transportation infrastructure until after World War II.

Railroad structures from this early period in Ypsilanti included a wooden passenger station, freighthouse, and a large woodshed for fuel. Increased commercial traffic allowed businesses to flourish in the vicinity of the railroad complex. Today the entire area is known as Depot Town, the second organized business district in Ypsilanti.

The Freighthouse was built in 1878 in response to the burgeoning commerce in the area. Construction lasted four months and was completed by contractor C.T. Douglas from Aurora, Illinois.

From the time of its construction until the early 1930s, an agent of the MCRR was in charge of both the passenger and freight depots; however, as rail freight declined in favor of trucking, the railroad subleased the freight operation to other companies.

A local business used the building during the 1960s and 1970s as warehouse, when the windows were covered with dark green plywood giving it a derelict appearance.

The Freighthouse was acquired by the City of Ypsilanti in 1979 and was used as a community center housing a bi-weekly Farmers' Market. The open layout and rustic character made an attractive site for weddings, parties, community events, fundraisers, civic meetings, auto shows, antique auctions and a polling place for local elections.

The building was ordered closed by the City Building Department and a rescue group, Friends of the Ypsilanti Freighthouse, has been actively raising funds and rehabilitating the structure to meet current building codes.



12 E. FOREST AVENUE

Heritage News Briefs

CHAUTAUQUA at the RIVERSIDE promises to put the “heritage” back into Ypsilanti’s annual Festival

Two days of historical programs
at the Riverside Arts Center:

Saturday & Sunday, 18 & 19 August 2012

Featuring highlights of local history through exhibitions,
lectures, demonstrations, panel discussions,
Q & A sessions, musical presentations, documentary films

In 1901, three men formed the Michigan Ladder Company with help from the City of Ypsilanti who provided land near the Huron River and the railroad depot if the principals would invest \$3000 and agree to hire at least ten men. Melvin Lewis, A.G. Huston and Edgar S. Geer, became the first officers of the company although they knew precious little about making ladders other than Lewis holding a newly issued patent. They met the challenge at 12 E. Forest Avenue and the facility they built there would become the company's permanent location.

Deliveries in horse-drawn wagons were replaced by railroad cars and trucks. The original building served its purpose well but was added onto 25 times. Ladders, initially the only product, were joined by toys, ironing boards, boats, and ping pong tables, only eventually to be reduced back to just ladders.

Lewis' patent for an extension ladder with automatic locking catch set the standard for safety that has been a benchmark for innovation in the industry. Ladders with unique features were developed to meet and exceed industry standards. While wooden ladders have continuously been made by hand at the wooden building by Frog Island, the line now includes ladders of aluminum and fiberglass.

Originally a seasonal market with production lasting only 10 months a year, Michigan Ladder prided itself in never laying off workers even during the Great Depression. The company's most famous sideline was the “Detroit” ping-pong table that went around the world when the U.S. Navy bought hundreds for shipboard entertainment. It even made the movies with Tom Hanks as “Forrest Gump” using the same table that was made here on Forest Ave. The Harlem Globetrotters likewise carried them around the nation, in four pieces each, to be set up for halftime competition.



**“Ypsilanti’s Role in the 1812
Surrender of Detroit to the British”**
by historian and author Anthony J. Yanik

**“The Civil War &
the Underground Railroad Connection”**
by documentary filmmaker Jeffrey O'Den
with questions and answers to follow

“The Story of Willow Run”
a 1944 Ford Motor Co. film

“They Tell It Like It Was”
Patricia J. Majher,
editor of Michigan History magazine,
interviews local history writers who

“Then & Now”
a show of modern lantern slides in which
history writer Laura Bien compares her blog favorites

Ypsilanti Community Choir
features tunes from 1800
and that hit song by Francis Scott Key

The Dodworth Saxhorn Band,
a re-creation of one of America's first all-brass bands,
salutes Civil War veterans

“This Place Matters”
Mayor Schreiber moderates a panel including Ypsilanti's
Heritage Foundation, Historical Society, Historic District
Commission, and EMU's Historic Preservation Program

Local house museums on stage:
1835 Cobblestone Farm, 1850 Sutherland-Wilson Farm,
1860 Asa Dow House, 1900 Rentschler Farm

Historical organizations' displays in the lobby
of the Riverside Arts Center

CHAUTAUQUA at the RIVERSIDE
It's fun and it's free!

See June's printed program for starting times



The historic Navarre-Anderson trading post on the River Raisin in Monroe. The building at left is recognized as the oldest wooden structure in Michigan.

Gabriel Godfroy's story is told from many points of view

Ypsilantians like to drop Gabriel Godfroy's name when trying to make this old place sound even more historical. It's a good way to get up a conversation on local history and becomes a starting point as one of the earliest 19th century signposts along our historical route that we still recognize. As we observe the bicentennial of the War of 1812, history shows us that "Godfroy's on the Pottawatomie Trail" played a pivotal part in the surrender of Detroit to the British at the war's beginning. Much will be told of that event at this August's Heritage Festival.

A search of the Fletcher-White Archives indicates our scholars and history writers have been digging into the Godfroy story with gusto over the years. Several documents and publications help us understand that Godfroy may not have been the first settler here before Woodruff's Grove, but he certainly was on speaking terms with those who were.

First of all, he wasn't the first

In Ypsilanti GLEANINGS, Fall 2009, Karl Williams, a graduate student in the Historical Preservation Program at Eastern Michigan University told of notes from Hugh Heward's 1790 journal, in which "Gabriel Godfroy was both aware and involved with the trading post established by Jean Baptiste Sanscrainte at Ypsilanti as early as 1790, and Godfroy, who was a man with connections and some wealth, quite likely purchased Sanscrainte's trading post at Ypsilanti in the early 1800's. Godfroy spoke the local Indian language, as did Sanscrainte, and they were acquainted."

Godfroy established a chain of peltries – including one on this Ypsilanti site

Patrick Tucker, of the University of Toledo, has published a paper indicating some history of the Godfroy/Beaugrand trading enterprise: "Welcome to Hard Times: French Merchants and Militiamen Godfroy and Beaugrand Meet the War of 1812 in the Detroit River Region During the Early American Republic", co-authored with Laurel Heyman and submitted to the Michigan Historical Review for the special issue of the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812.



Natives brought fur pelts to trade

Tucker says, "French fur traders Gabriel Godfroy, Sr., and Jean-Baptiste Beaugrand established a mercantile trade between Detroit and Kekionga (Fort Wayne) during the early 1790s. Their house, store, and outbuildings at the Miami (Maumee) Rapids were destroyed after the battle of Fallen Timbers by General Anthony Wayne's American legion in 1794. After becoming American citizens in 1796, they rebuilt their house and store at the Miami Rapids and expanded their mercantile operation to include transnational merchandise catering to the rural trade of American frontier settlers and Native Americans alike. During the War of 1812, their trade operations on the Miami Rapids and the River Raisin were again destroyed, but by British and Indians this time. After the war, Beaugrand was the only person to be indicted by the United States for murder during the massacre of the Kentucky wounded on January 23, 1813, and Godfroy was indicted for treason. Both were acquitted in court of the charges. Beaugrand was thought to have been possessed by the devil in his act of murder. The jury's decision on Beaugrand's acquittal may be related to their superstitious fear of him as recounted in French folklore of Detroit that recounts his association with the devil disguised as an old mare named 'Sans Souci' that he owned."

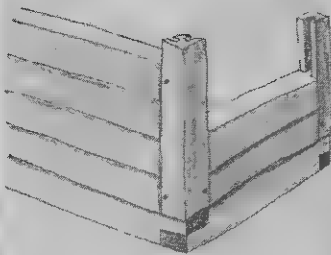
Visit our French "cousins" in Monroe

The Navarre-Anderson Trading Post is a former trading post complex at 3775 North Custer Road in Frenchtown Charter Township along the River Raisin in Monroe County



The reconstructed French style barn (left) typical of some in the early Frenchtown settlement was a contemporary of the peltry at Ypsilanti's site

Following the custom of similar French colonies, Godfroy's trading post most likely was built in the "piece-sur-piece" method of construction

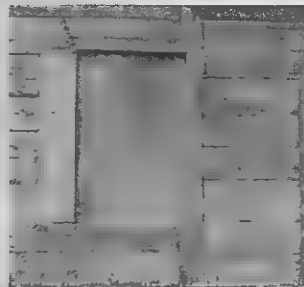


Posted piece-sur-piece construction is still used in modern building technology

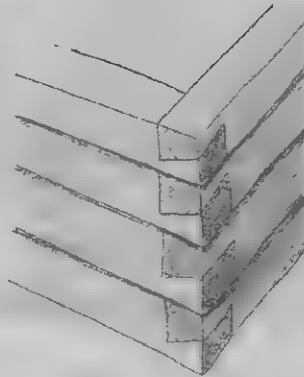


Left: "Hillside Farm," c. 1880. Work house and family, built c. 1852 in the piece-sur-piece method. Demolished.

Below: A typical French cabin in the piece-sur-piece method of construction.



Left & above: Posted piece-sur-piece details



Keyed logs in the piece-sur-piece tradition



A modern keyed-log piece-sur-piece cottage in Quebec

Gabriel was one of three

There were three Gabriel Godfroys in succession making it difficult for historians to sort out two hundred years later.

Louis S. White wrote "Ypsilanti History Begins in Godfroy Trading Post," in the *Ypsilanti Press*, October 1980, originally published 30 June 1936, furthering the notion that Godfroy was the area's first European: "James Godfroy de Mau-boeuf, the progenitor of the family in America, was born in the parish of St. Martin de Cantilan, a suburb of Rouen, diocese of Rouen, France, in 1653, a son of John and Collette (Danlerville) Godfroy..."

"Gabriel James Godfroy, grandson of the above and son of James Godfroy and Louisa Clotilda Chapotan, was born in Detroit, November 10, 1758..."

"Gabriel Godfroy was married three times; first to Mary Catherine Contoure, Jan. 8, 1781, second to Mary Tresa Bondy, Feb. 14, 1795, and third to Monica Campan, Jan. 14, 1817. He had fifteen children, five by his first wife and ten by his second..."

Son, "Gabriel, born July 3, 1783 married Elizabeth May and died in 1848," (first of 15 children listed as "the children of Gabriel Godfroy")

Excerpts follow from "Our First Bicentennial," by Jeff Davis, in *GLEANINGS*, Summer 2009: "...Which Gabriel Godfroy built the trading post on this site in 1809? There were three generations of Godfroys named Gabriel. The first, Jacques Gabriel (called Gabriel because his father was also named Jacques), was born on November 10, 1758 in Detroit... This was the Gabriel Godfroy that founded the trading post... The next Gabriel was his son. He was born on July 3, 1783 in Detroit. Between 1797 and 1808 he worked with his father at "Godfroy and Beaugrand" in Detroit.

James Mann did a story in *GLEANINGS* showing the home of the third Gabriel Godfroy (the one who actually lived in Ypsilanti and ran the outpost established by his father and grandfather) that stood at today's entrance to Riverside Park off N. Huron Street.



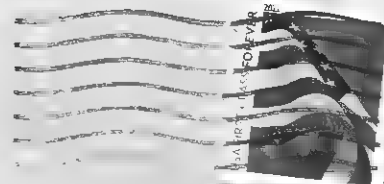
Gabriel Godfrey III's house (in the Greek Revival style) was demolished



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Alex Pettit
Claudia Pettit
Don Randazzo
Jane Schmiedeke

Alvin E. Rudisill
1935 Collegewood
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

*Dedicated to the belief that one of Ypsilanti's greatest
resources is its wonderful historic architecture*

See you at the Marker Awards Banquet - Wednesday, 23 May, 2012, at 7:30 p.m.

Heritage News is the newsletter of the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation. It is published five times a year: September, November, January, March, and May; and distributed, free of charge to the membership by mail, and made available to the public at City Hall, Farmers' Market, and various business locations in the three business districts in the City.



Pre-dating the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival, the Heritage Foundation's annual Home Tour continues to be one of our community's most popular attractions, showing off some of the area's premier architectural wonders.

See the
35th annual
**HOME TOUR
PREVIEW**
at the 23 May
Marker Awards Banquet

2012 SCHEDULE

Meetings are held at the Ladies' Literary Club,
218 N. Washington Street, Ypsilanti, at 7:30 p.m.
The public is welcome.

23
MAY

Annual Marker Awards Banquet

19
AUGUST

36th Annual Home Tour

19
SEPTEMBER

Program to be announced

11
NOVEMBER

Program to be announced

23
JANUARY

Program to be announced

20
MARCH

Program to be announced

Heritage

NEWS

The Good News Issue



Why we like to look at old houses

Realtors smile and smugly call us "Looky-Loos," knowing full well that we don't intend to buy anything. They've got our number: they conclude we're just at their Sunday open houses because we're nosy. But inveterate home-tourers think there's more to it than that. We say it's the instinct for nest building that draws us to see the insides of other people's houses.

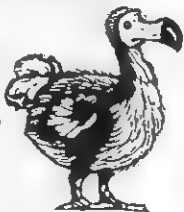
Academics tell us the nesting instinct refers to the urge in pregnant animals to prepare a home for the upcoming newborn(s). It is found in a variety of animals (both mammals and birds), including humans. We can agree with most of that—with the exception of the "pregnant" part.



In animals: In rodents—and most of the critters we strive to keep OUT of our houses—the nesting instinct is typically characterized by the urge to seek the lowest sheltered spot available—where these mammals give birth. Female dogs may show signs of nesting behavior shortly before their due date that include pacing and building a nest with items from around the house such as blankets, clothing, and stuffed animals.



Domestic cats often make nests by bringing straw, cloth scraps, and other soft materials to a selected nook or box; they particularly are attracted to haylofts as nest sites. In birds it is known as "going broody" and is characterized by the insistence to stay on the nest as much as possible, and by cessation of laying new eggs.



In humans: In human females, the nesting instinct often occurs around the fifth month of pregnancy but can occur as late as the eighth—or not at all. It may be strongest just before the onset of labor. It is commonly characterized by a strong urge to clean and organize one's home and is one reason why couples who are expecting a baby often reorganize, arrange, clean the house, and maybe even wax the driveway.

[continued on page 6]

HOME TOUR TICKETS

\$10 in advance

<u>Downtown</u>	Salt City Antiques Materials Unlimited Haab's Restaurant
<u>Washtenaw</u>	Norton's Flowers & Gifts
<u>Depot Town</u>	Nelson Amos Studio
<u>Ann Arbor</u>	Downtown Home & Garden

\$12 day of tour

Haabs Restaurant
& in front of the
Ypsilanti Historical Museum

Ypsilanti
Heritage
Foundation's



204 Elm Street

Jasper and Carole Pennington

120-124 West Michigan Avenue

Mellencamp Building loft apartments

Eric and Karen Maurer

228 West Michigan Avenue

Wolverine Grill / Kevin Hill

1885 Packard Road

Breakey Farm Home/
Ypsilanti Public Schools
Administration Building

214 North Huron Street

Dr. Cheryl Farmer

714 East Forest Avenue

Amy and Jesse Morgan

105 North Normal Street

Dian Love

192 Oak Street

Karen Wongstrom

Beginning overleaf:

Property descriptions editor, Penny Schreiber;
photographs by Lynda Hummel

204 Elm Street

Rev. Jasper and Carole Pennington



The brick arts and crafts cottage-style home of Jasper and Carole Pennington was built about 1926 by James and Betty Power. James Power was the area manager for the Craine Stationery Company. The house served as the rectory for St. Luke's Episcopal Church from 1951 until 1986. Jasper Pennington was the rector of St. Luke's from 1983 until 2001, and the Penningtons moved into the house in 1983, purchasing it in 1986. Its interior is captivating, reflecting the Penningtons' keen interest in antiques and family history and showcasing their collections of pottery, music, and books.

As tourgoers go through the first floor of the house they will enjoy the reproduction 1880s William Morris Strawberry Thief wallpaper in several rooms; the Pewabic tile on the entryway floor and the original chandelier hanging above; and the stained glass windows displaying the Pennington coat of arms. Family portraits and other fascinating family treasures abound. Of special interest is the sizable portrait of New Jersey governor William Pennington that is an original etching by artist A. B. Walter of a photograph taken by Civil War photographer Mathew Brady. It hangs just to the left as you enter the front room.

The kitchen was first remodeled in the 1950s and then remodeled again in 2010. Motawi Tileworks of Ann Arbor designed the tile backsplash and counters. The Penningtons had the front porch enclosed in 1990, allowing them to use it in all four seasons. Wicker furniture on the porch came from Carole Pennington's maternal grandparents. Outside of the house the corner lot holds a variety of plants and shrubs tended by Mrs. Pennington. They provide color over many months and food for birds and squirrels year round. An interesting variety of outdoor ornaments enhances the gardens, which have spread out onto the Grant Street easement. A garden shed and the original two-car garage complete the property.

120-124 West Michigan Avenue

Mellencamp Building / Eric and Karen Maurer



Ypsilanti developers and landlords Eric and Karen Maurer purchased 120, 122, and 124 West Michigan Avenue in March 2010. With the rich history of the buildings in mind, they renamed them the Mellencamp Building. A clothing store and the longest-lived retail tenant in downtown Ypsilanti, Mellencamp's inhabited the first-floor commercial space at 122 for 116 years, closing in July 1984.

Built in the 1850s, the buildings encompass 16,020 square feet of retail and residential space. The Maurers restored the first floor into three now-thriving retail spaces and created twelve stunning loft apartments on the second and third floors. This brings the number of loft apartments the Maurers have renovated in downtown Ypsilanti to forty-two. The twelve apartments rented by word of mouth before they were ready for occupancy. Tenants are young professionals or graduate students.

All of the apartments have some brick walls and lots of light pouring in to wide-open living spaces. Tourgoers will be seeing three apartments today. The tenants have applied personality, imagination, and style to organizing the spaces to suit themselves. Two decided against the suggested location of the bedroom. One is using it as a sophisticated dressing room that features a fabulous large wood-framed mirror leaning against the wall; the other has the space set up as her "den," with a TV and a cozy couch. The third tenant created an enclosed bedroom for his young daughter and walled off an area for a home office. In this apartment tourgoers will enjoy seeing the mid-century-modern kitchen table with six matching chairs that came from the tenant's grandmother. Ladders displaying beautiful shoes are scattered about the apartment of the tenant with the dressing room, and the tenant with the den has a silvery faux fireplace.

When the Maurers took possession of the property, scraps of paper documenting transactions at Mellencamp's were found in the stairway leading to the second floor.

228 West Michigan Avenue

Wolverine Grill / Kevin Hill



customers diner style for over seventy-five years. John Batsakis, a Greek immigrant, bought the restaurant in 1938 after enduring much hardship during the Great Depression. He lived in an apartment above his business for twenty-five years until he sold it to his nephew Greg Batianis. The diner remained in the family for another four decades until, sadly, it closed in October of last year. Greg's daughter, Deb Comer, the last family member to run the business, and her husband, Mike, still own the property and are currently renovating the apartments above.

Enter current proprietor Kevin Hill, who began his cooking career at Aquinas College in Grand Rapids and went on to hone his chef skills in Hawaii, California, and Marquette, Michigan. He retired from the culinary arts field as a vocational instructor in Livingston County. A big booster of the Ypsilanti business community, Hill could not sit idly by when a once-bustling eatery closed its doors. But the "old girl" needed a bit of sprucing for round two. After more than a half century of serving the public, the daily grind had taken its toll on the Wolverine. Hill jumped in with both feet and began the rejuvenation of the Wolverine.

The high tin ceiling remains, along with the ceiling fans, which give the place a vintage feel. The too-bright fluorescent lights have been muted, fresh paint applied, and the old chrome lunch-counter stools cleaned up. The menu has been elevated above simple coney-dog diner fare to showcase some of Kevin's favorite dishes. Ingredients will be locally sourced, when possible, and the Ugly Mug Cafe and Roastery is providing the java and Growing Hope the fresh produce and greens in season. Business is returning to the Wolverine, and the future may bring some evenings of family-style dining. Kevin Hill has abandoned his retirement to bring a historic Ypsilanti business back to life.

1885 Packard Road

Ypsilanti Public Schools Administration Building



A mainstay of the Ypsilanti restaurant scene, the Wolverine Grill has been serving

The center part of this Greek Revival structure dates from 1830, when Isaac N. Conklin built it for his family. In the nineteenth century, the house was far out in the countryside and the centerpiece of a farm with fruit orchards. In 1910 when Dr. James Breakey and his wife bought the house, it was still a country place. The Breakey family did not move in until 1915, and they moved out a year later because it was too far away from town. The family rented the farm to others over the years; they bought neighboring farms until they owned 130 acres.

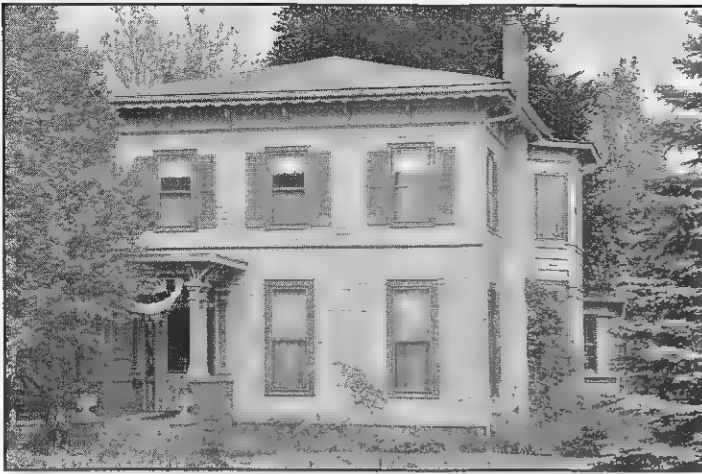
The Breakeys' son, James Jr., always dreamed of moving back into the house. By 1967 he was Judge Breakey, and he and his wife, Evelyn, remodeled the house using plans he designed and they moved in. The remodel added two libraries, a master bedroom wing, a breakfast room, a garage, and a gardening room and nearly doubled the size of the house. Judge Breakey died in 1969, and under the terms of his will the house and property were bequeathed to the Ypsilanti Board of Education in memory of his parents. The school district moved their offices into the house in time for the beginning of the school year in September 1970.

A second addition was completed in April 2011 on the east side of the building, paying heed to its Greek Revival style. A spacious development room and storage spaces fill up the new wing. Tourgoers will enjoy going through the building, which features original woodwork and five fireplaces. Many details of the original house and the Breakey addition remain. Artist Steve Allen is the husband of Karen Allen, administrative assistant to the superintendent. A number of his oil paintings are on loan to the building and they enliven the walls at every turn.

A school district receptionist who has worked in the building for twenty-six years is certain it is haunted. She used to come in frequently at 4:30 a.m., and while making phone calls to substitute teachers she'd listen to someone bumping around on the second floor. "I am sure it is Mrs. Breakey," says the receptionist. "I've heard her many times."

214 North Huron Street

Dr. Cheryl Farmer



This stately Italianate house was built between 1851, when the property was deeded to grocer Frederick Andrews, and 1856, when it first appeared on the city map. It retains its characteristic Italianate features like the elaborately detailed entryway and the low roof with wide overhanging eaves supported by decorative brackets. The bay windows and the wonderful enclosed porch on the south side that wraps around the back of the house are later additions.

Most fortunately, the essential interior character of the house has survived multiple uses, including being divided into apartments, housing the Boys and Girls Club in the 1960s, and serving as a continuing education center for Washtenaw Community College in the 1970s.

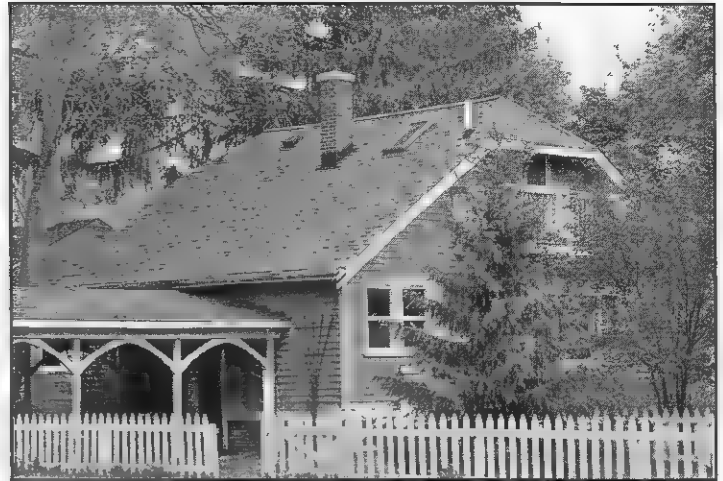
Former Ypsilanti mayor Cheryl Farmer, who is also a physician, has owned the house since 1988 when she purchased it from Paul and Gerry Woodside. The couple had undertaken a four-year renovation that was nearly ruined by a 1984 fire. Dr. Farmer built on their efforts by removing temporary walls to open up the porch and creating a second interior staircase to access the second floor. She had the original banister restored and the bathrooms completely redone with period fixtures.

Everywhere in Dr. Farmer's house are paintings by her father and grandmother, glass art by her sister, and family furniture, including many items given to her by her parents when they broke up housekeeping to live year-round in Hawaii. Examples are her mother's piano, a bed made by her father that he gave to her mother on their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary, and a pier mirror, also made by her father, that was a fiftieth-anniversary present. Tourgoers will be visiting the terrific second-floor furnished apartment, which was not open in 2000 when the house was last on this tour. Dr. Farmer's parents stay in the apartment when they are in town.

The view out the back windows is to Riverside Park and the river.

714 East Forest Avenue

Amy and Jesse Morgan



This charming bungalow, originally built in Willow Run sometime in the 1930s, was moved to its present location on East Forest by Robert Lloyd. A young man who worked as a civil engineer at Willow Run Airport, Lloyd and his wife, Hazel, moved into the house on the new site as newlyweds in 1947. Lloyd was offered a job in California. The couple went west but decided not to sell, leaving everything in place until their expected return. The furniture and many of their belongings, including dishes in the kitchen sink, remained undisturbed over the years. Neighbors mowed the lawn, looked after the home, and let their children play in the yard. Finally the windows were boarded up to keep them from being broken.

Robert and Hazel Lloyd never returned to their Ypsilanti home. In 1971 they were listed as the "retired" owners, and by 1975 the house was described as vacant. The Lloyds left it to their family to sell their honeymoon house in Ypsilanti. An empty time capsule for at least twenty years, the house avoided unfortunate interior changes. The wood trim was never touched, and the original character of the house remained intact.

The house was finally sold to new owners in the early 1970s and then sold again in the 1980s. In 1992, EMU professor Rebecca Martusewicz bought the house, planted trees, and transformed the empty lot into a series of English gardens. In 1998 she began to re-imagine the space inside. With the help of her father, she designed an attic suite complete with a balcony overlooking the garden.

Amy and Jesse Morgan bought 714 East Forest in 2005. A two-career couple with two delightful young children, they have somehow found time to complete a house project every year. The exterior has been painted, the kitchen remodeled, a new bathroom put in, and windows replaced. Recently they added a new front porch. The newest owners understand the Lloyds's attachment to their house. The Morgans say they can't imagine ever leaving it.

105 North Normal Street

Dian Love



When Dian Love first walked into this diminutive 1860 house in 2003 she immediately noticed that she could see all the way through it from the front to the back door. "It had one common lane," says Love. A retired professor of interior design who has taught at U-M, EMU, and the Rhode Island School of Design, Love had always wanted a house with white walls in the Greek Revival style.

Love bought the 878-square-foot house and immediately set about making it into her home. The front porch was in a shambles and the exterior needed fresh paint. After she took care of those problems, Love changed the inside from a two-bedroom into a one-bedroom house, redid the bathroom, and had all the walls painted white. She took out interior doors and framed the openings. The space across the front of the house functions as her living area to the right of the entryway and her office to the left. The narrow kitchen at the back is an earlier addition.

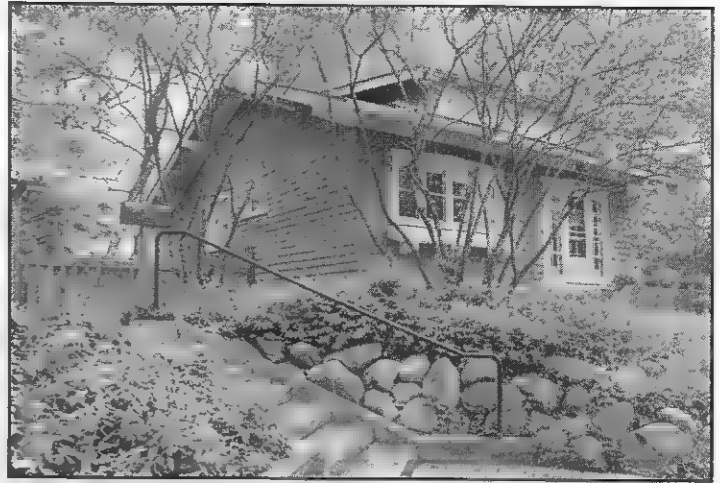
A search at the U-M Bentley Historical Library turned up two owners, one in the late nineteenth century and the other in the early twentieth, who lived in the house with a boarder (presumably long before the addition). This offers inhabitants of the twenty-first century insights into the different living-space requirements of those who lived in previous centuries.

Love's tiny house is full of her amazing stuff: paintings she describes as "Rhode Island signed pieces"; framed fragments of Chinese, Peruvian, and Egyptian textiles from the second and third centuries; Chinese export porcelain pieces from the late 1800s; and much more.

The small house extends dramatically in nice weather into the spacious back yard, where Love has created a blue garden inspired by French and British ones she has admired. The garden is what tourgoers will see when they look through the house from the front door to the back.

192 Oak Street

Karen Wongstrom



Near the end of World War I Ypsilanti carpenter Frank Lidke built several houses in the Oak-Forest neighborhood. Among them was the charming bungalow at 192 Oak Street. In 1920 he sold the new house to George Jackson, probably a farmer, and the father of seven-year-old Lucy. Lucy Jackson Gridley lived in the house for sixty-four years until she and her husband sold it in 1984 to landscape architect Paul Sieron.

Sieron adapted the interior of the home to suit his tastes and utilized his landscaping skills to create the front gardens. The house and garden deteriorated with the next owner. Since 2010 the present owner, Karen Wongstrom, has freshened the interior with new paint and added her turn-of-the-century antiques. She is currently restoring the front garden.

The bungalow style was popular throughout the United States from about 1890 through the early twentieth century. Typically one or one-and-a-half stories (this house is one story) and strongly horizontal, the style was characterized by a gently sloping roof with wide overhanging eaves. Bungalows gradually lost popularity and by World War II were no longer being built. Today bungalows are once again valued for their practical designs, natural materials, and harmony within the landscape.

This particular example also used distinctive tapered Egyptian-influenced window and door trim. As you enter, notice that the trim style is repeated in the rooms inside. Tambour doors, salvaged from the old School of Pharmacy at Wayne State University, and leaded glass panels, discovered in a Depot Town antique shop, were used by Paul Sieron to create the elegance of a vestibule separate from the living room. Antique shops in Depot Town also yielded the handsome oak mantle that surrounds a black marble fireplace and the built-in sideboard in the kitchen.

The present owner has used rich but subdued colors to give a cozy craftsman feel to the interior while not distracting from the light that floods in the windows and the delightful sense of being in nature. As you leave through the back door you can still look out on a backyard little changed from when seven-year-old Lucy played under the oaks.

Good News for Historic Preservation @ Ypsilanti

Good News

Commercial Historic Structure Markers awarded in May 2012

bring the total to more than 150 markers awarded throughout the city since the program began. Most of the 2012 markers call attention to great examples of adaptive re-use, critical to preservation.

Recipients included:

- The Corner Brewery
- Materials Unlimited
- Utilities Instrumentation
- Michigan Ladder Company
- MCRR Freighthouse
- Millworks Building / Ypsilanti Food Co-op
- Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Collection



Photo by Lynda Hummel, whose photo essays on Ypsilanti signage will be featured in the next issue of Heritage News

Good News

A revised City sign ordinance

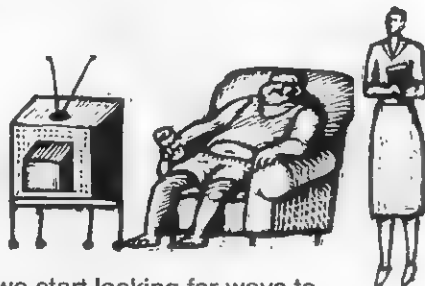
enacted in 2011 now protects designated signs of historic significance:

- Rapid Shoe Repair on Pearl Street
- Bull Durham Tobacco on the Follett House in Depot Town
- Tap Room
- Terry Bakery
- Haab's Restaurant
- Marquee at 31 N. Washington
- Trojan Dry Cleaners
- Hudson sign at the Automotive Heritage Museum
- Peninsular Paper Company

Looking at houses

[continued from page 1]

For some of us, the instinct never lets up. We feel it long after childbirth. In fact, sometimes it kicks in when we start anticipating the tots LEAVING our nest as we start looking for ways to change the space they've been taking up for so long.



Hundreds of people in Ypsilanti get this same nest-building feeling in late summer when the annual Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation Home Tour is announced.

Iconoclast Al Wallace disagreed with this popular theory in 1856

[Printed in the INTELLECTUAL OBSERVER of July 1867]

Alfred Russel Wallace, in "The Philosophy of Birds' Nests" argues that ... [p. 413] "Birds, we are told, build their nests by instinct, while man constructs his dwelling by the exercise of reason. Birds never change, but continue to build forever on the self-same plan; man alters and improves his houses continually. Reason advances; instinct is stationary. This doctrine is so very general that it may almost be said to be universally adopted.

"Men who agree on nothing else, accept this as a good explanation of the facts. Philosophers and poets, metaphysicians and divines, naturalists and the general public, not only agree in believing this to be probable, but even adopt it as a sort of axiom that is so self-evident as to need no proof, and use it as the very foundation of their speculations on instinct and reason. A belief so general, one would think, must rest on indisputable facts, and be a logical deduction from them. Yet I have come to the conclusion that not only is it very doubtful, but absolutely erroneous; that it not only deviates widely from the truth, but is in almost every particular exactly opposed to it.



A.R. Wallace, Library of Congress

"I believe, in short, that birds do not build their nests by instinct; that man does not construct his dwelling by reason; that birds do change and improve when affected by the same causes that make men do so; and that mankind neither alter nor improve when they exist under conditions similar to those which are almost universal among birds."

Food, water, shelter. Everything else is extra. We'll see you birds on the Home Tour. -td

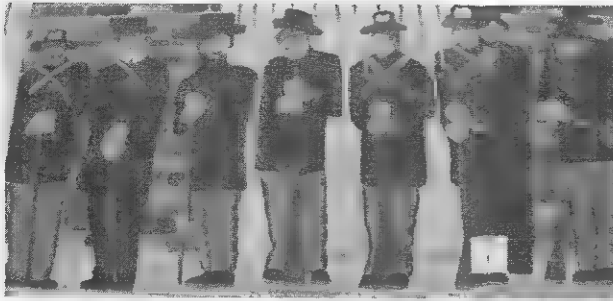
Good News @ the Thompson Block

John and Mary Delcamp, members of the Civil War reenactors, Company E, 17th Michigan Infantry, contacted building owner Stewart Beal for permission to add murals over the covered windows of the historic Thompson Block that was ravaged by fire in September 2009. Beal agreed and they contacted the Historic District Commission and Ypsilanti High School art teacher Robin Evans.

Sixty-seven of Evans's students took it from there with two-dimensional designs commemorating the space that served as a barracks, a wagon repair shop, army mess hall, and living quarters for recruits waiting to be shipped off to the country's Civil War.

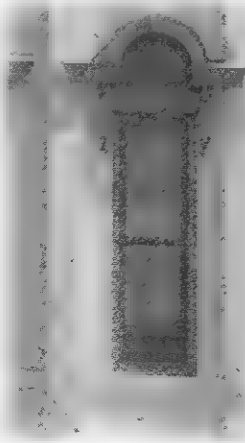
Evans told AnnArbor.com, "Having their artwork out in the community is big. It's great having it inside, but putting it up somewhere where the whole public can see it is huge for them and gives them pride in their town and their school."

Participating students are planning a commemorative ceremony during August's Ypsilanti Heritage Festival.



Good News @ 120 W Michigan

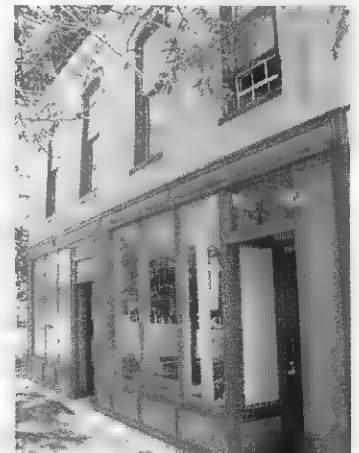
Window hoods designed and constructed to replicate originals removed when metal facade was attached.



Good News for Historic Preservation



Good News
@ 330 E. Cross -
Front porch stair rail
designed and constructed
to match existing
original porch rail.



Good News
@ 234 W Michigan
Handsome paint job.



The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

Heritage News

Claudia Pettit
945 Sheridan
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

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Dedicated to the belief that one of Ypsilanti's greatest resources is its historic architecture

See you at the Home Tour Sunday, 19 August 2012, Noon-5 p.m.

Heritage News is a publication of the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation. It is published six times a year: August, September, November, January, March, and May; and distributed free of charge to the membership by mail, and made available to the public at City Hall, Farmers' Market, and various business locations in the City business districts.

Good News



Famous entrance

Good News

Downtown's venerable Tap Room gets a new coat of paint

Known for its unique low-mounted front door handle intended to extend a subtle welcome to the many "little people" who worked in tight places on the WWII bombers at Willow Run, the Tap Room provides a delightful "before" and "after" drama to this summer's street scene as their upper stories shift from white to gray.

Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation meetings are held at the Ladies' Literary Club, 218 N. Washington Sreet, Ypsilanti, MI.

The Ladies' Literary Club was organized in 1878. The Club House, of the Greek Revival type, was built in the 1840s and purchased by members of the club in 1914.

Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation meetings held at the "Ladies' Lit" are open to the public



"Ladies' Literary Club" watercolor by Barb Starnerv

Heritage

NEWS



Next General Meeting
Bill Kinley & Gary Cooper
regarding the restoration of the

FLOUR MILL

**7:30 p.m. Wednesday,
19 September**

@ The Ladies' Literary Club
218 N. Washington Street
The Public is invited

Signs of Our Times ...and Before

Highway travelers were familiar with the products of itinerant sign painters. Burma Shave, Swamp Root, and Mail Pouch Tobacco were among the nationally-known posters that found their way to Ypsilanti, but every town also had its local sign painters.

Their studios were splashed with paint and smelled of turpentine. Children liked to watch them lay down a line and sketch in their letters free-hand. Watching a painter apply a "drop shadow" was like seeing a classy magic act combined with superlative acrobatics.

These were the artisans who lettered the bank president's office door in gold leaf and helped the laundry lady decide what she wanted on her "shingle." Taxi and bus doors were lettered by hand, and every shop window held the result of the local sign painter's brushwork.

Many of Ypsilanti's commercial buildings were constructed of a porous brick that was intended to be painted even when new, so sign painters were often called in to "refresh" the work on street-facing walls.

Was it the presence of the schools and colleges in this town that contributed to the fact that Ypsilanti was known for "best spellings" on their signs?



Flour Mill is focus of September program



Ypsilanti Archives 1888 photo



Phoenix Construction 2001 photo



Ypsilanti Archives 1889 photo

The Ainsworth Flour Mill at completion in 1888, decorated with signs in 1889, and rehabilitated in 2001

The Ainsworth Flour Mill was featured on a past Home Tour as a "landmark at the eastern gateway to the historic Michigan Avenue business district." Bill Kinley, owner of Phoenix Contractors, Inc., purchased the property in 2000 and spearheaded its redevelopment as a vibrant mixed-use property working closely with architect Gary Cooper of Cooper Design Associates to ensure the building's continued historic integrity.

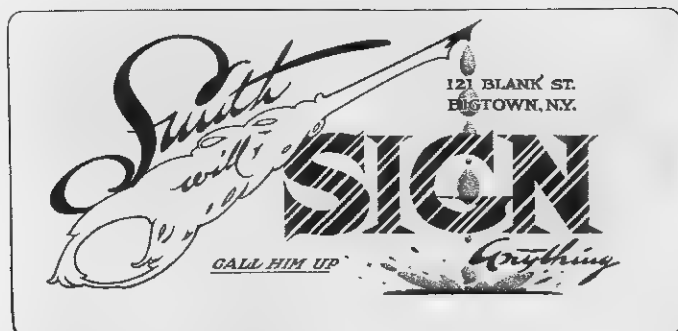
The building was constructed in 1888 as the O. A. Ainsworth and Co. Feed Mill and Grain Storage at 514 and 516 Congress Street. Owner Oliver A. Ainsworth contracted the Detroit architectural firm of Mason & Rice to build the structure, which features striking Romanesque arches and a prominent roofline—both showing the influence of renowned architect Henry Hobson Richardson. Mason & Rice also designed the neighboring Ypsilanti Savings Bank (today the Ypsilanti City Hall) and Starkweather Chapel in Highland Cemetery.

The Ainsworth mill operated until about 1910. Since that time, the building has served as a feed and grain store, general store, lumber business, and numerous restaurants.

- From 2011 YHF Home Tour notes

The Flour Mill is a great example of the adaptive re-use of a unique historic structure. The 11,000 square foot building needed extensive work to create the dynamic space found here today. The original storefronts had been removed, all the original windows had been inappropriately replaced, the brick had been painted and poorly constructed additions had been added to the rear.

The renovated space is a wonderful mix of old and new, with exposed beams and brickwork. Arching windows grace the ground floor space and multiple skylights enhance the loft apartments upstairs. Due to the integrity of this renovation the project qualified for a federal Investment Tax Credit. - Phoenix Contractors, Inc.



**In the Sign Shop,
there's always something to do.
When the sign painter doesn't
have a job to do for somebody else,
he paints signs for himself . . .
...to show off his considerable skill:**



Sign painting is the act of taking a specific kind of brush, and with various kinds of paint, applying it to a 2- or 3-dimensional surface creating letters, forms and/or symbols. Sign painting is a learned craft with a long history within the realm of "artisans-crafts".

Historically, apprenticeships were the means of learning the craft though many, in the earlier history of the craft were self-taught. An apprenticeship could last for years, depending on the skill of the apprentice and the knowledge of the "master". The skills learned were varied and some were exceedingly complex.

Basically, learning to manipulate a lettering brush was the core of the learning process. This skill alone could take years to master. There were a number of associated skills and techniques also taught such as: gold leafing (surface and glass), carving (in various media), glue-glass chipping, stencilling, silk-screening.

With the advent of the computer and various kinds of software now available, the sign painting craft has been displaced with computer-driven sign-making machines. The "craft" has all but disappeared, and in only a few technical schools or specialty schools is the craft still taught.

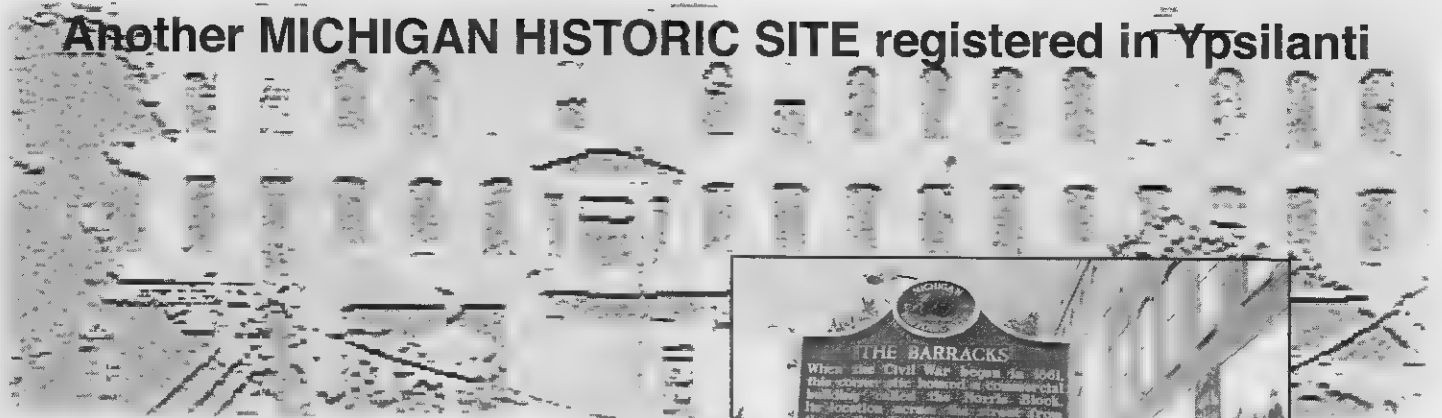
Sign painters are usually self-taught and/or taught by mentors in the business. This is because sign painting is rarely offered in schools/universities, which in turn is the reason it could be considered a dying trade. However, most professional sign painters are quite passionate about their work and see today's computer-generated signs as both a blessing and a curse.



See more Graphic Sign Images in
"Vintage Commercial Art & Design"
by Frank H. Atkinson, Charles J.
Strong, and L.S. Strong, Dover Publi-
cations, Inc., Mineola, New York



Another MICHIGAN HISTORIC SITE registered in Ypsilanti



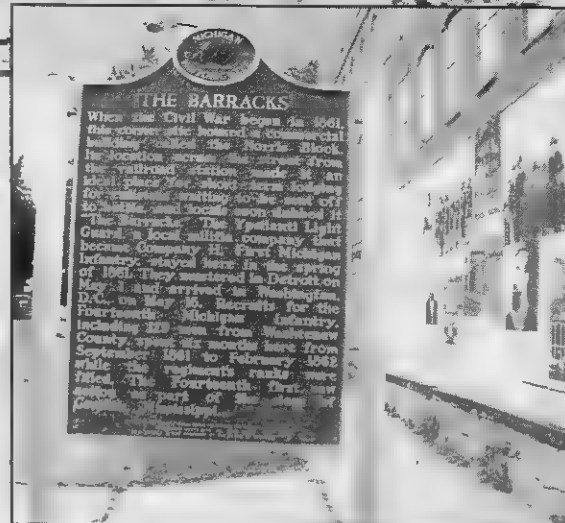
State marker installed on north-east corner of North River and East Cross

South Side of marker: THE BARRACKS

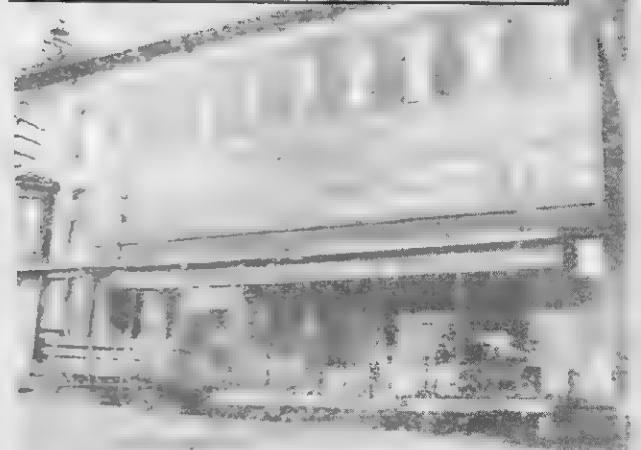
"When the Civil War began in 1861, this corner site housed a commercial building called the Norris Block. Its location across the street from the railroad station made it an ideal place for short-term lodging for enlistees waiting to be sent off to battle, and locals soon dubbed it "The Barracks." The Ypsilanti Light Guard, a local militia company that became Company H, First Michigan Infantry, stayed here in the spring of 1861. They mustered in Detroit on May 1 and arrived in Washington, D.C., on May 16. Recruits for the Fourteenth Michigan Infantry, including 129 men from Washtenaw County, spent six months here from September 1861 to February 1862 while the regiment's ranks were filled. The Fourteenth first saw action as part of the siege of Corinth, Mississippi"

North Side of marker: YPSILANTI IN THE CIVIL WAR

"More than 4,000 soldiers from Washtenaw County served during the Civil War. Hundreds bivouacked here, in the Norris Block, before mustering into service. More than thirty men who were students or graduates of The Michigan State Normal School (now Eastern Michigan University) joined Company E of the Seventeenth Michigan Infantry in 1862. Their first action was at South Mountain in Maryland. In December of 1863, the First Michigan Colored Infantry stopped here as part of its state-wide recruiting drive. In 1902 veterans of the Twenty-Seventh Michigan Infantry held their reunion here. Since the 1880s this site has been known as the Thompson Block and has had a variety of commercial uses."



The Michigan Historical Site Barracks/Civil War marker was installed in July 2012



The Thompson Building in 1905; before any City sign ordinance was in place

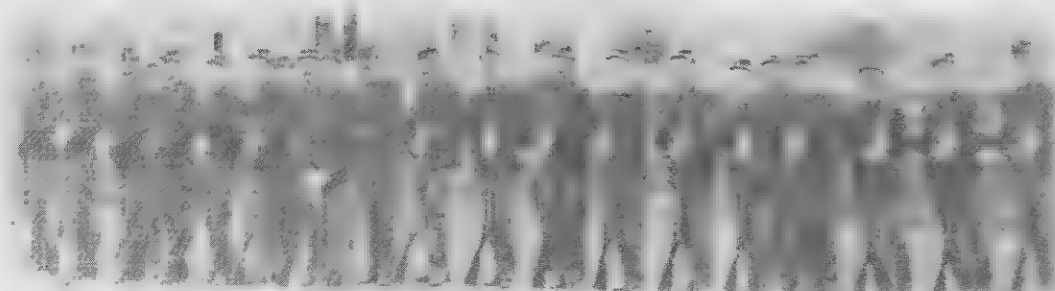
John & Mary Delcamp report it was Company E. 17th Michigan Infantry who paid \$3,400 to the State of Michigan for the construction of the marker. Stuart Beal, owner of the Thompson Building, installed the marker at his expense.

Over 3500 State Historic Sites in Michigan

- 96 in Washtenaw County
- 20 in Ypsilanti

How many
Ypsi sites can
you name?

See the list on page 5



New sign policies for Our Town

Ever since the psalmist wrote "Give me a sign..." (Psalms 86:17), the people have been asking for standards. City Council has updated their sign ethics for today's world:

- No signs on the roof
- Window signs can take up 25% of a window - down from 30%
- Ground signs, sidewalk signs, "pup tents", and "sandwich boards" are taboo

Temporary signs are still vexing:

- A city-issued 30-day permit is required and only two will be permitted a year
- Sidewalk signs limited to six square feet and made of weather-proof material
- Residential "for sale" signs are now limited to 12 square feet and must come down three days after fulfillment
- Construction signs are limited to 64 square feet and must be removed seven days after project's finish

Neon window "outlines" are no longer permitted and even murals will require a permit and business murals must conform to steeper standards.

Prohibited signs:

- Abandoned signs
- Signs not specifically permitted under the ordinance
- Animated signs (no blinking, flashing, waving, pulsating, or undulating)
- Portable signs
- Signs containing obscene material

Businesses must now submit a "master sign plan" indicating size, location, lighting and other characteristics.

Old favorites survive the ordinance update

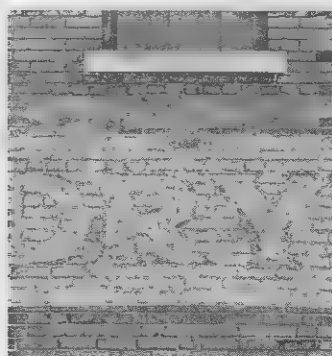
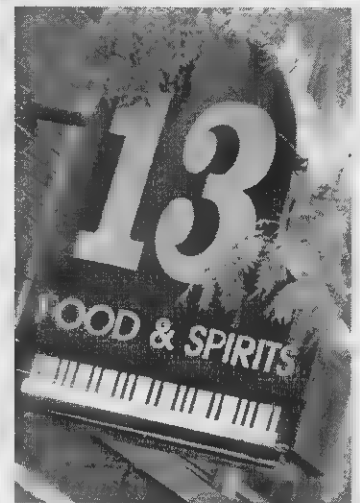
City Council has designated as "historic" some of our favorite signs in town and they won't be included in the city's updated sign ordinance.

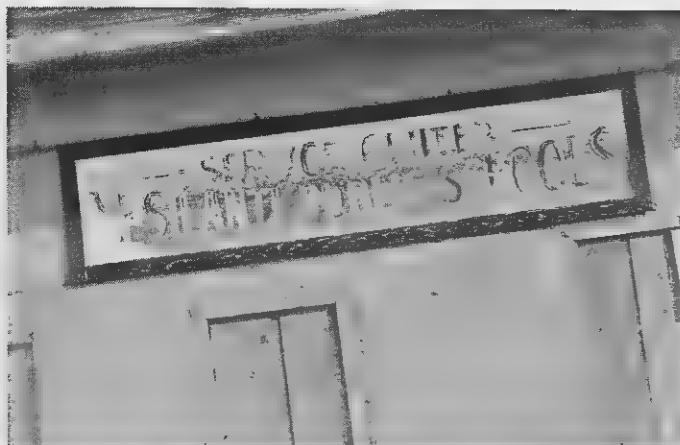
Signs that have become part of our history include those found at:

- Haab's, 18 W. Michigan Ave.
- Tap Room, 201 W. Michigan Ave.
- Rapid Shoe Fix, 115 Pearl St.
- Bull Durham Tobacco, 19 E. Cross St.
- Deja Vu marquee, 31 N. Washington St. (it's not DejaVu that's historic; it's the marquee)
- Terry Bakery, 119 W. Michigan Ave.
- Trojan Dry Cleaner, 20 N. Adams St.
- Hudson sign at 100 E. Cross St.
- Peninsular Paper sign in Peninsular Park (the only example on the list that is not in the Ypsilanti Historic District)

SOURCE: "Ypsilanti City Council approves list of historic signs to be exempted from new sign ordinance", Tom Perkins, AnnArbor.com, Friday, 7 October 2011

Photographer, Lynda Hummel, makes a record of Ypsilanti sign painters' art for posterity





Editors' note: Without a budget like National Geographic, we regret we had to suck all the gorgeous color out of Hummel's work. More sensitive viewers can see these photos—and hundreds more—in their original qualities on Flickr: www.flickr.com/photos/eye-photog/sets.



Ballard House

125 N. Huron

Barracks/Civil War

R. River & E. Cross

Brinkerhoff-Becker House

601 W. Forest

Cleary College (info site)

2170 Washtenaw

William M. Davis House

(Ladies' Literary Club)

218 N. Washington

Eastern Michigan College

(info site)

College Place @ Forest

First Baptist Church

1110 W. Cross

First Methodist Episcopal Church

209 Washtenaw

First Presbyterian Church

300 N. Washington

Hutchinson House

600 N. River

Elijah McCoy

(commemorative site)

229 W. Michigan

MCRR Freighthouse

435 Market Place

Michigan Interurbans

(info site)

E. Michigan & N. Park

Prospect Park

Prospect @ E. Cross

Science & Manual Training Building (Scherzer Hall)

Putnam @ W. Forest

Starkweather Hall

901 W. Forest

Willow Run Bomber Plant

Tyler/Hudson @ US 12

Ypsilanti Area

(Ypsilanti Historical Museum)

220 N. Huron

Ypsilanti Historic District

Approximately

200 properties

Ypsilanti Water Works

Stand Pipe (water tower)

Cross @ Summit



Many of Hummel's works are available in calendar format at Standard Printing, 120 E. Cross Street.



“Billboard Bandits”: anti-sign vigilantes of the ‘70s

Newspaper headlines shouted “Billboard Bandits” every time a huge highway poster fell. News photographers scoured the sites of demolition and featured shots of cut-off poles and giant billboards crashed on some farmer’s cornfield alongside the major highways.

“Who’s cutting down our billboards?” they asked, and nobody ever figured out the answer. Forty years later, parts of the story can be told—but only a few parts.

It was the decade following the Summer of Love and of high-schoolers becoming aware of the damage being done to the environment. They picked up on broad national slogans for living a more ecological life and they wanted to do something dramatic about it. They were conservative in their use of commodity footprint, but they wanted to be radical in their perception of “returning to the earth.”

“Buzz” and “T.R.” attended every session of the school’s programs on saving the environment and often led the discussion about the “Bandits” who were cutting down billboards along Interstate 94 from Detroit to Jackson. Police figured the culprits must be from somewhere in the southeast Michigan area, but were unable to discover their identity. It seemed both the police and the general public liked the romantic sobriquet attached to the miscreants. The “Bandits” were heroes to some, but not to the advertisers and the companies that sold, created, and erected those billboards blocking the view of the landscape.

After an early spring lecture on inhibitions to the environment, “Buzz” and “T.R.” took their teacher to the upper-story classroom window overlooking the school’s parking lot. “Notice anything unusual out there?” they asked.

Not being terribly creative, the teacher counted the cars in the parking lot and assessed which were faculty-owned, which were students’. “No,” she said. “It looks like the same collection of old junkers that I see down there every day.”

“What about our van?” they hinted broadly, pointing out the Volkswagen micro-bus camper the boys had been living in for the past few weeks. “Notice anything unusual about that old V-dub? Does it always look like that to you?”

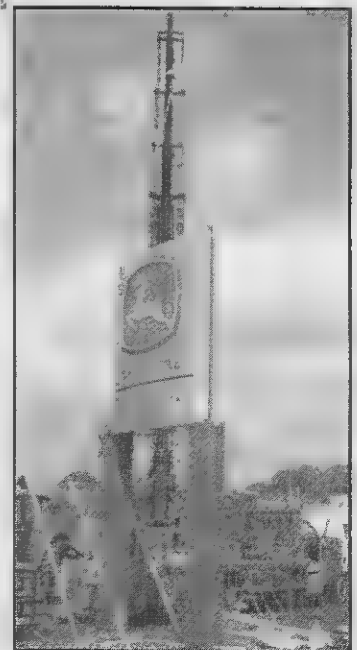
“Well, yes!” she responded. “It’s always dirty and I think that camping gear has always been there in the luggage rack.”

The boys chuckled knowingly. “Yep,” they said. “That’s the same junk we’ve been hauling around for the four years we’ve been in high school. It’s above eye-level. That’s where we keep our chain saws and other tools. You may have read about us in the papers.”

They confessed that they were, indeed, the “Billboard Bandits.” And then they went off to college in other states—and the billboards around Ypsi and Ann Arbor stopped falling.



Three generations: Seven members of the Short family at their S. Mansfield sign shop in Ypsilanti: dad, sons, and grandson, June 2012



A John Deere installation by Huron Signs



Construction at Huron Sign Company's S. Mansfield Street facility



In 2005, Huron Sign was recognized by the premier industry association, as one of the top designers in the field

Huron Sign Company is a high-quality establishment that has been serving its clients for over 45 years. They started out in the Millworks Building on N. River Street and have now expanded to a huge facility at 663 South Mansfield (past the UPS terminal at the end of the road, backing up to a good view from I-94).

Huron Signs is a full service company providing the unique combination of a highly experienced staff and a wide range of technologically advanced manufacturing equipment. As an added benefit they offer the ability to request services and installation online.

Although they are proud of their products, services, and technology, nothing matches the pride they have in their staff. They say they learned long ago that "we're really in the business of building relationships." For that reason, they have put a premium on hiring only the most qualified individuals to serve on their team of experts.

Huron Sign's staff is committed to providing excellent customer service and producing high-quality products and services. Heritage NEWS' editor had no trouble getting an interview with the Short brothers at their every-Saturday-morning-breakfast at The Bomber restaurant.



Signage goes up for Café Habana in downtown Ann Arbor



Installation at the Ann Arbor Auto Mall



The "Golden Beacon" at Domino's Farms

Huron Sign Company
663 South Mansfield
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
P.O. Box #980423
Ypsilanti, MI 48198-0423
800-783-0100
Fax: 734-483-5164

Installation photos on these pages came from Huron Sign Company's web page: customerservice@huronsign.com

Consultation for a sign:

Customer: "What should I put on my sign?
We're selling farm-fresh eggs."

Sign Painter: "How about, FOR SALE – TODAY
– HERE – FARM FRESH EGGS?"

Customer: "How much would that cost?"

Sign Painter (pondering): "Well, you don't really need to say TODAY; of course it's today. You wouldn't put the sign out there if you didn't have any eggs right now. Same goes for HERE. It's extraneous; your sign is right in front of your driveway. And FRESH ought to be obvious. What's fresher than from right beside your chicken coop? And, for that matter, who needs FARM? It's all around you! Let's leave it out.

Customer: "So how much would it be to just say, EGGS? That ought to do it."

[A lesson for sign painters and journalists]



The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

Heritage News

Claudia Pettit
945 Sheridan
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

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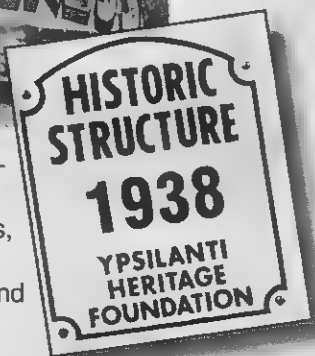
Dedicated to the belief that one of Ypsilanti's greatest resources is its historic architecture

See you at the General Meeting - Wednesday, 19 September, at 7:30 p.m.

Heritage News is the newsletter of the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation. It is published five times a year: September, November, January, March, and May; and distributed, free of charge to the membership by mail, and made available to the public at various business locations in the City.



"Give us a sign," they said, and 195 historical markers have been awarded by the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation to owners of homes, barns, and commercial buildings throughout the city. There are other plaques placed around town calling attention to our heritage, but the billboard that appeared on E. Michigan Ave. @ First St. this summer may be the largest marker yet calling attention to our history. Within each letter in the traditional postcard format is a clip of something historic in Ypsilanti: buildings, sculptures, churches, festivals, even chrome-plated hot rod engines. With Riverside Park for background, it's all there in a forty-foot poster touting Ypsi's long and colorful story.



2012/2013 SCHEDULE

Meetings are held at the Ladies' Literary Club,
218 N. Washington Street, Ypsilanti, at 7:30 p.m.
The public is welcome.

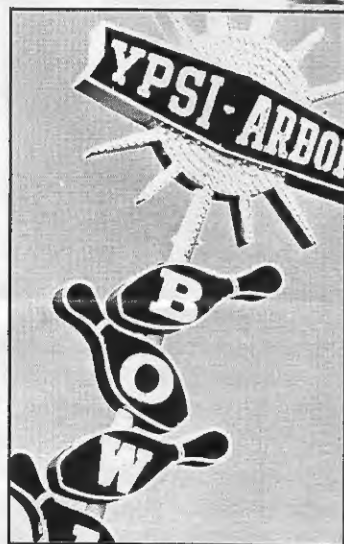
SEPTEMBER	Bill Kinley & Gary Cooper regarding restoration of the Ainsworth Mill
NOVEMBER	TBA
JANUARY	TBA
MARCH	TBA
MAY	Annual Marker Awards Banquet

Heritage NEWS



November 2012

Preserved / Removed



The Ypsi-Arbor bowling alley sign has been removed from Washtenaw Avenue, but the Bull Durham Tobacco poster still peeks out from the west wall of the historic Follett House on East Cross Street. The Durham sign is among several signs preserved by the City's recent sign ordinance and is protected for posterity.

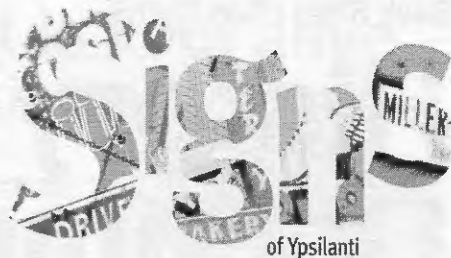
Disappeared / Fading

The Ypsilanti Iron Works' sign has disappeared with the development of Water Street, and "ART" is gradually fading from our walls.



Don't be satisfied seeing these local examples of sign painters' art in washed-out black-and-white postage stamp-size reprints in the newsletter. Come to the November 7 program and enjoy them in gorgeous historic colors.

Next General Meeting



- Lynda Hummel's photos of Ypsilanti signs
- Kevin Short on the history of the Huron Sign Company
- Teresa Gillotti on Ypsilanti's updated sign ordinance

7:30 p.m.

Wednesday

7 November 2012

Ladies' Literary Club

The public is invited

Ypsiphiles who have already picked up Lynda Hummel's colorful calendars featuring unique signage in Our Town will not be disappointed at the enormous and colorful projections of these images at the November 7 General Membership meeting of the Heritage Foundation. Huron Sign Company's Kevin Short will tell his family's historic enterprise of placing signs, boosting Ypsilanti over the years. Also, Ypsilanti City Planner, Teresa Gillotti will discuss recent changes in the City's sign ordinance.

The September issue of Heritage News focused on historic signs in Ypsilanti, the fading tradition of local sign shops, Lynda Hummel's photo essay of hand-painted signs in Ypsilanti, the City's new sign ordinance, Huron Sign Company's history, the "Billboard Bandits" of the seventies and more. November's program will address many of these topics and is open to anyone who reads signs along the highway.

Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation meetings are held at the Ladies' Literary Club, 218 North Washington Street, Ypsilanti, at 7:30 p.m. The public is welcome. Refreshments follow the presentations allowing everyone the opportunity to meet the evening's presenters.

Back Story / Ken Burns

History's Documentarian

By Gwendolyn Purdom, *Preservation*, Fall 2012

Ken Burns's documentary series *The Civil War* riveted the country when it debuted in 1990, and his other American history-focused works have examined subjects from Lewis and Clark to Prohibition. "Every film I've done has brought me to a place that has had extraordinary historical resonance," Burns says. *Preservation* spoke with Burns about his work and the importance of place.

Q: What do you think it is about places that makes them so important to understanding our history?

A: Whatever we do, we leave some sort of residue of who we are, our intentions and hopes, our fears and dreams, and I think historical places represent us. They radiate with what we find beautiful and, in the case of places we save, they remind us who we think we are and who we might become going forward.

Q: How would you rate how well we're preserving our history in these places?

A: We're still a relatively young country, and for way too long we just felt that everything that we had done before was disposable. I think we've woken up after the Second World War and begun to understand that we really did need to save. Human nature never changes, and particularly in tough times, these places help. You know when you're standing on the rim of the Grand Canyon, you're walking into the Lincoln Memorial, you're getting a tour of Monticello, they're not asking you, "Are you red state or blue state? Are you rich, are you poor? Are you black, are you white? Are you gay, are you straight? Are you male, are you female?" Even whether you're an American or not. They're just saying, "Welcome to something that



Upcoming projects for Burns include films on the Vietnam War, the Roosevelt family, and Jackie Robinson

we"—and that means not just them, but all of us—"consider valuable."

Q: Is there one topic or event that you feel has shaped our story more than others?

A: The most important event in American history is the Civil War. No doubt about it. So those battlefields, and the residue of that conflict, wherever it may be—in Richmond, Va., or Montgomery, Ala., or Washington, D.C., or Gettysburg, or Antietam—all of these places have huge significance for me.

Q: How would you define a preservationist? Do you consider yourself a preservationist?

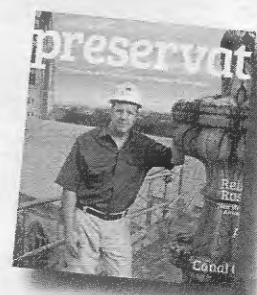
A: Yes, very much so. It can take many, many forms. It can be the preservation of ideas. The preservation of images. The preservation of words. I sort of deal in that arena, but it may also mean the preservation of places. I take advantage of those who work heroically to save battlefields and houses and architecture and things like that. A preservationist is someone who knows you can't possibly have a future unless you have a past.

In the 1960s, brothers Rick and Ken Burns were students in the editor's Creative Problem Solving classes at Ann Arbor's Pioneer High School. Editors of *Preservation*, the magazine of the National Trust for Historic Preservation have kindly permitted YHF to reprint their Fall 2012 interview with the famed preservationist and documentary filmmaker

Q: So many of your films have colorful stories and anecdotes. Is there a particular moment in history that you wish you could have been present for?

A: I'd obviously have to be there at Ford's Theatre and stop the assassin. That would be the thing where you'd want to do intervention. But with any of these places, what you get excited about is exactly what you're talking about [with colorful stories and anecdotes bringing the past to life]. Faulkner said, "History is not was, but is." And that's a really great thing to say, because there are moments, if I do my job well, you do feel like you're there.

To read more from *Preservation's* interview with Ken Burns, visit PreservationNation.org/online



Preservation magazine is the publication of the National Trust for Historic Preservation

Documentaries by Burns' company, Florentine Films:

Baseball: The Tenth Inning

Unforgivable Blackness:

The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson

Jazz

Frank Lloyd Wright

The West

William Segal

Thomas Hart Benton

Statue of Liberty

The National Parks:

American's Best Idea

Horatio's Drive:

America's First Road Trip

In the Marketplace

Lewis & Clark: The Journey of the
Corps of Discovery

Vézelay

Empire of the Air:

The Men Who Made Radio

The Shakers:

Hands to Work, Hearts to God

The War

Mark Twain

Not For Ourselves Alone:

the Story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton
& Susan B. Anthon

Thomas Jefferson

Baseball

The Civil War

Huey Long

Brooklyn Bridge

Prohibition

FILMS IN PRODUCTION

The Dust Bowl

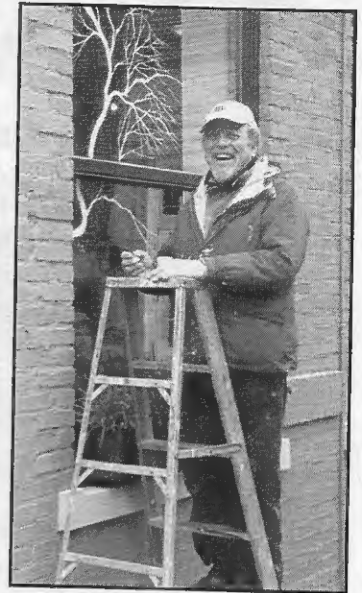
The Central Park Five

The Roosevelts

Jackie Robinson

Sign painters' art is kept alive by master artist John Copley

There are still sign painters around. At age 66, John A. Copley still paints signs occasionally. He and Zeke Mallory have shut down their Ann Arbor-based Crow Quill Graphics, but Copley is still seen on his ladder around town from time to time. The son of a Latin scholar and textbook author, Copley was not quite named for the early American portrait painter, John Singleton Copley, although they were both highly dedicated to their crafts in the visual arts. John A. is known in Ypsilanti for his big sign on the south wall of the Sidetrack Grill & Bar on East Cross Street.



John S. Copley

Have you seen the light?

Perhaps the most subtle piece of historic preservation in town is the old Edison light bulb hanging in front of the box office window at the Riverside Arts Center. Barry LaRue rescued the installation from the renovation of Albert Kahn's Hill Auditorium on the University of Michigan main campus. The antique bulb was LaRue's touch—and very much appreciated by those who revere an authentic presentation



What We Do

Through its numerous yearly activities the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation educates the community about the philosophy and purpose of historic preservation and encourages public and private preservation efforts in the city.

The YHF -

- Publishes a bimonthly newsletter
- Hosts an informative public program on preservation or historical topics in September, November, January, and March
- Presents preservation awards to local homeowners at its Marker Awards Banquet every May
- Sponsors a popular annual historic home tour in August and makes financial contributions to local preservation projects



The Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation

Heritage News

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Don Randazzo
Jane Schmiedeke

Denis & Jane Schmiedeke
313 High St.
Ypsilanti, MI 48198-2912

*Dedicated to the belief that one of Ypsilanti's
greatest resources is its historic architecture*

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Sign Quiz:

of Ypsilanti

Can you identify the signs in Lynda Hummel's calendar title (above)? One does not have to be born 'n' bred in Ypsi to recognize Terry Bakery's classic design (letter "g") or the old sign on the north wall of Miller Motors (second letter "s"), but what about the "S-I-N"?

The first "s" is long gone from the Beer Cooler on Michigan Avenue, sacrificed for the Water Street Project. The giant skate at the roller rink east of town is gone as well, but lives on in Hummel's letter "n". Both signs have been destroyed. The letter "i" may puzzle at first; it's the little elf at the other end of the rolling pin on the Terry Bakery design.

All this—and more—will be revealed in the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation's program on November 7.

2012/2013 SCHEDULE

Meetings are held at the Ladies' Literary Club,

SIGNS

W/ Lynda Hummel's photos,
Kevin Short's history of Huron Sign
Co., and Teresa Gillotti's com-
ments on the updated Ypsilanti sign
ordinance

7
NOVEMBER

23
JANUARY TBA

20
MARCH TBA

22
MAY Annual Marker Awards Banquet